

THE TIMES

No. 65,821

MONDAY FEBRUARY 24 1997

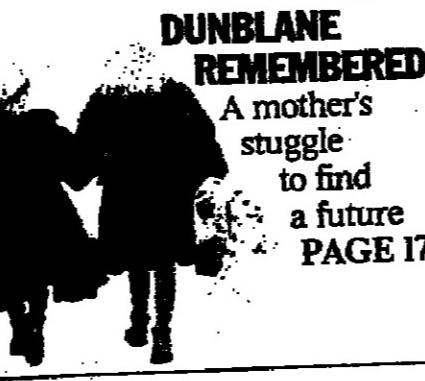
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PLUS WEEKEND CAR 97, WEEKEND MONEY 1015 FOR YOUNG TIMES READERS AND 7-DAY TV AND RADIO GUIDE IN THE DIRECTORY

Warning on 'human clones'

Fears follow production of sheep from single cell

By JEREMY LAURANCE AND MICHAEL HORNSEY

THE CHILLING prospect of a woman giving birth to an identical twin of her own father was raised by doctors yesterday after the announcement that scientists have for the first time succeeded in creating a clone of an adult animal.

Dolly, the Finn Dorset lamb who is the identical twin of her genetic mother, grazed contentedly on an experimental farm near Edinburgh while ethics experts warned she could be the harbinger of a scientific revolution in which animal life could be endlessly re-created without the need for sperm.

Doctors said the success of the scientists at the Roslin Institute in

Edinburgh, who have created an exact copy of an adult sheep from a cell in its udder, opened up the theoretical prospect of a world populated by identical clones of human beings.

However, the company which has bought the rights to the research, PPL Therapeutics, said the breakthrough would improve understanding of ageing and genetics and lead to the production of cheaper medicines.

The Roslin scientists, led by Dr Ian Wilmut, took the nucleus containing the genetic material from the mother sheep's udder cell and implanted it into another sheep's egg from which the genetic material had been re-

moved. The resulting embryo was then placed in a third sheep, which acted as a surrogate mother, and Dolly was born seven months ago. Dolly's existence was disclosed for the first time yesterday and details of the experiment are to be published in *Nature* this week.

Dr Patrick Dixon, author of *The Genetic Revolution*, said the same technique could potentially be applied to human beings.

"This is an historic event. It is without parallel in genetic advances. Almost any technique that can be done with a mammal can be done with a human. It will bring with it a huge number of ethical questions."

Dr Dixon said he had been asked by a woman last week how she could clone her father, who had died.

"She wants to bring him back to life as a baby, perhaps even carrying him in her own womb," he said. "After hearing of Dr Wilmut's progress, I sent her a message today to say it will be possible sooner than she thinks."

Cloning can produce an exact copy, or identical twin. The genetic material must be taken before death or shortly afterwards as freezing destroys the cells. Dr Dixon said people who might want to use the technique could include:

□ People with serious illnesses

such as leukaemia, who could produce an embryo "twin" for "spare part" transplant or trans-fusion purposes.

□ Dictators who wish to produce carbon copies of themselves.

□ Parents who fear they might lose a child to cot death and would produce an identical replacement as a precaution.

□ Entertainment moguls wanting to recreate dead stars.

In Britain, research on human embryos which have been removed from the womb is controlled by the Human Fertilisation and Embryology Authority and human cloning is banned. Suzanne McCarthy, the

Continued on page 2, col 1



Dolly is now 7 months old

Models of 13 on the catwalk

By GRACE BRADBURY
STYLE EDITOR

Vivienne Westwood, centre, with some of her teenage models during London Fashion Week at the Dorchester Hotel yesterday

Kohl rival throws doubt on wisdom of rushing EMU

FROM ROGER BOYES
IN BONN

GERHARD SCHRODER, the German Social Democrat most likely to challenge Helmut Kohl in next year's election, yesterday made his strongest ever commitment to delaying the introduction of European monetary union.

His comments — in an interview to be published today — came as an opinion poll showed that 77 per cent of Germans now want to postpone the common currency until after 1999. "You have to be able to stop a train which is running in the wrong direction," Herr Schröder told *Der Spiegel* magazine, referring to the euro. "If Kohl wants to declare this subject taboo, then he is revealing a rather problematic attitude towards the democratic fabric of our society."

The interview will be seen as a way of making the future of the euro a major general election issue.

Finance Ministry experts, quoted by *Focus* magazine at the weekend, say that Germany's overall debt will rise from 60.5 per cent of gross domestic product to 61.5 per cent this year. The Maastricht treaty stipulates a maximum figure of 60 per cent and interpretative leeway is supposed to be granted only to those states which can show a consistent reduction; Germany's debt, however, has been climbing since 1991.

Economists are already doubting that Germany can stick to its promise of keeping its budget deficit down to 2.9 per cent of gross domestic product just within the

Clarke's doubts

Kenneth Clarke last night added his weight to Government scepticism over the launch of a single currency by saying that it was very unlikely to start on time.

The Chancellor endorsed the Cabinet position that monetary union would have to be delayed because of the difficulties in meeting economic targets.

After a week in which he and Malcolm Rifkind, the Foreign Secretary, were forced to deny allegations that they were split over the single currency, Mr Clarke was anxious to show unity.

condition that the entry criteria

would be strictly applied and providing that each further step towards integration be monitored by the German parliament.

But the most potent opposition at present seems to come from Herr Schröder. Although the Social Democrats have yet to name their official rival to the Chancellor, popularity polls put Herr Schröder a clear five or six per cent ahead of the German leader. An opinion poll published at the weekend shows that 59 per cent of Germans want a greater role for Herr Schröder in the politics of the day, while only 45 per cent have the same hopes for Herr Kohl.

Delaying the common European currency said Herr Schröder would not destroy the project, nor

create havoc in Europe. "For me, unlike Helmut Kohl, this is not a question of war and peace in Europe... a delay will not lead to the return of the nationalist problems of the 19th and early 20th centuries."

The Social Democrat — who is

Finance Minister of Lower Saxony — thus deliberately echoed the words of Malcolm Rifkind, Foreign Secretary, who sparked controversy with a Bonn speech last week.

Herr Schröder stressed he was not against economic and monetary union as such, only against a weakening of the entry criteria. He was convinced that Germany

would have to engage in creative accounting to stand a chance of

making monetary union on the basis of its 1997 results.

Vegetables bred to beat cancer

Vegetables genetically engineered to give enhanced protection against cancer could soon be available. Broccoli and Brussels sprouts are particularly rich in "secondary compounds", called glucosinolates, many of which are toxic and appear to act as natural pesticides.

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Cricket ground row splits village

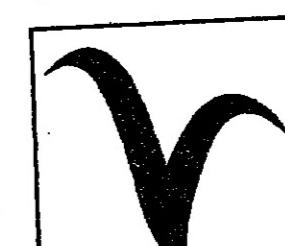
A village has been split by a squabble over the future of its cricket ground on land worth a potential £6 million. The committee of the Oaklands Park club, near Weybridge, Surrey, says that falling membership have left it with no choice but to sell to developers.

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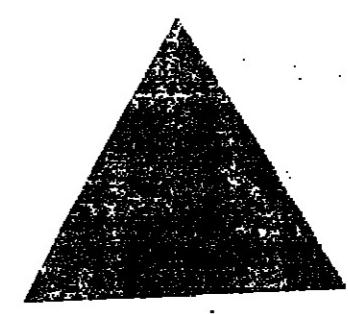
Funeral ban on deposed leader

Zhao Ziyang, the former Chinese Communist Party chief deposed during the Tiananmen demonstrations in June 1989 for sympathising with student protesters, has been banned from attending the private cremation today of Deng Xiaoping.

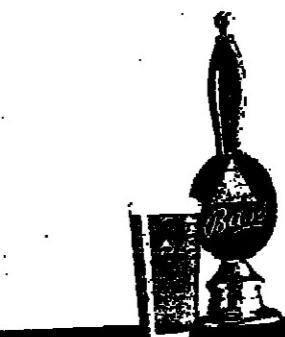
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Suitable for vegetarians.



Unsuitable for big girls' blouses.

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Locals accuse struggling club of plotting to sell picturesqure home for development after 130 years

Village battles over £6m threat to cricket ground

BY STEPHEN FARRELL

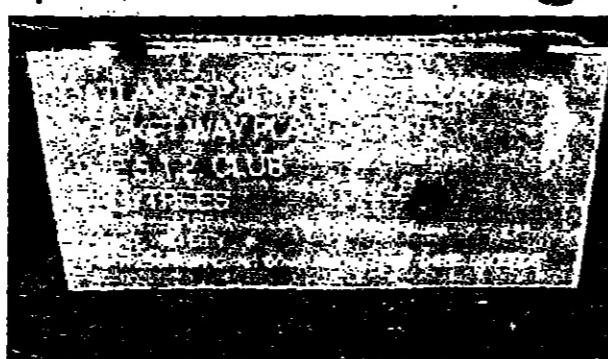
A VILLAGE has been split by a squabble over the future of a village cricket ground on land potentially worth £6 million.

The committee of the 130-year-old Oatlands Park Cricket Club, near Weybridge, Surrey, claims falling membership levels have left it with no choice but to propose dissolving the organisation and selling the six-acre playing fields to building developers McAlpine. But others say the estimated 130 members who own it stand to benefit if developers update their 1988 bid of £4.3 million to build 30 houses on the site.

A secret letter from the club to all members confirms that the best offer from developers will be discussed at a special meeting at the nearby Cobham Hilton on March 2. Ken Sanger, 48, a director of a freight forwarding company who lives nearby, said the club's founders would have been disgusted to see it closed.

"I think it is a place of great charm and beauty. It's lovely to hear the sound of bat on ball in the garden on a Sunday afternoon."

What the club members get for their membership is up to them. I wouldn't like it if someone tried to intervene in my tennis club, but I really don't think they should be able to sell it for development. If it has to go it should remain a sports ground," Ian Porter, 50,



Oatlands Park Cricket Club says it is under threat from falling membership and is considering closure

a company director whose £300,000 house, The Wickets, adjoins the club, said residents had little doubt of the club's intentions. "I moved here a year ago and tried to become a non-playing member but it was pretty obvious they didn't want me," he said.

"In August I telephoned the president, Peter Johnson, and offered to buy a piece of land from them, which would have helped our funds without any shadow of doubt, and I never even had my calls returned. My view is that they want to capitalise on it. They are not even giving the local residents a chance to help them, and let's face it, there's a few bob around here."

"Many of us would help out. I didn't buy this house next to some green and pleasant land for a lot of money to see a lot of houses put up on it. No-one

did." The club itself is surrounded by comfortable detached houses whose owners use the grounds to walk their dogs and let their children play safely on their bicycles.

The club groundsmen yesterday accused locals of failing to help out over the past few years, when declining membership levels made it become just the second club in 29 years to withdraw from the Surrey Championship. However Oatlands Park's honorary secretary, Dominic Harrison, refused to respond to accusations that members had been required to leave and that others were refused permission to join. He insisted the club's future would be decided by its members alone.

"Our situation is crystal clear. This is a private club and any considerations concerning it are for the members. It would be totally inappropriate for me to comment before the meeting on March 2."

"Everything that has been reported hitherto has been rather one-sided. I have personal opinions but none of them is relevant today and they will not be relevant next Sunday. Matters concerning the club are for the members' consideration only."

A local group, the "Friends of Oatlands", organised by residents Terry King and Mr Sanger, circulated a petition opposing redevelopment. It also sent a letter to cricket club members urging them to vote against the plans. "130 years ago the Founder Members of OPCC would have been proud to know that their club would still be going in 1997. Please make sure that members in 130 years time will be proud of you on March 2 by not dissolving the club and not redeveloping the land," the letter read.

In the letter to club members two months ago signed by the president, Peter Johnson, and chairman, Peter Silcock, proposed dissolving the club. Urging all members to "limit discussion of the club's position in members and others in whose discretion you have confidence", they blamed social and demographic reasons for a declining playing membership that meant Oatlands Park "has virtually ceased to exist as a



The ground could be sold to developers, say worried residents, who call it "a place of great charm and beauty"

club". The letter, dated December 4 1996, continued: "The committee thought it sensible to have some preliminary discussions with land agents. We are advised that there would be considerable interest in our site. A number

of prospective bidders have therefore been asked to submit draft proposals, the best of which will be selected and put forward to the members for consideration at the first EGM." Chris Fiske, results secre-

tary of the Surrey Championship, confirmed Oatlands Park withdrew from the league late last year. "I know that some of the players are very disappointed about it. It is not as strong as other clubs in the area but it is by no means the weakest team in the league. They have always fulfilled all their fixtures and they do not have a reputation for letting other clubs down. I hope things work out favourably for them in the end," he said.

Pilots to get a back-seat driver for safety's sake

BY HARVEY ELLIOTT, AIR CORRESPONDENT

FAMILY back-seat drivers will shortly be nagging aircraft pilots to alert them to danger. Psychologists have found that the voice of a wife, mother or girlfriend is the most effective way of conveying warnings to helicopter crews, fighter pilots and airline captains.

An electronics company is offering to use them to replace the anonymous female voices that deliver warnings in the USAF's "Top Gun" flight suits many RAF aircraft and North Sea helicopter flights.

When voice-warning systems were originally recorded a decade ago, the Defence Research Establishment at Farnborough in Hampshire found that women's voices commanded more immediate attention. The sound of a woman's voice, it was argued, made male pilots promptly sit up and take notice.

In 1987 only 8 per cent of air traffic controllers were women, but since 1990 more than a fifth of the 950 controllers recruited by the Civil Aviation Authority alone have been women, and the number of women pilots has doubled in the last five years.

With female voices now routinely heard in pilots' headsets, it is feared that men are becoming too accustomed to them and apt to pay them scant respect. Scientists have found, though, that the disembodied voice of a mother, wife or girl friend can still com-

mand respect, and grab the pilot's attention to alert him to dangers or technical hazards.

The British electronics company Racal is accordingly offering to "install" a personalised voice-warning system as "back-seat driver" in military and civilian aircraft all over the world.

The system records the voice of the individual customer thinks would command most attention so that it can then be fed into the aircraft's electronic warning systems before the pilot takes off. The recorded messages vary from friendly advice to "check your height" to urgent commands such as "land at once".

The recordings are made in a studio and the tone of voice and urgency can be varied according to the degree of pilot error or the potential danger, a Racal spokesman said yesterday. "Where helicopters or small jets fly low, or private pilots need to be shaken into paying immediate attention, the wife's voice is likely to be perfect for the job."

Dr Julie Edworthy of Plymouth University said: "What is important is to find a balance between habituation and so shocking the pilot that he over-reacts. A wife's voice would certainly get his attention because she would be the person he would least expect to hear while he was flying. Whether it is ethical to use the wife's influence in that way remains to be decided."

Pupils 'put on bail' for kissing

BY JOANNA BALE

TWO sixth-form pupils at a public school have been put on £500 "bail" by their headmaster after being caught kissing in a corridor. The boy and girl agreed to the "good behaviour bond" as an alternative to being expelled from Dean Close School, Cheltenham.

The headmaster, Christopher Bacon, said that at the time, the two were on final warnings after an earlier incident: "They were caught in a minor incident of a private nature and I am not prepared to divulge what happened."

"A compassionate alternative to excluding them was to put them on caution money, which is a deposit for their good behaviour. They will get it back at the end of their time here if they behave themselves. It is like being on bail."

Mr Bacon said that he had imposed a bond about a dozen times on pupils in the past 20 years. The school, founded in 1886, takes boarders and day pupils. Fees are up to £12,000 a year.

One mother, who declined to be named, said: "I don't agree with this action. The school is stopping them behaving like normal youngsters. They were not doing anything disruptive or immoral as far as I can understand."

"Dean Close used to be single-sex, and no one wants it to return to those days, but if you are going to have girls in the school, things like this are bound to happen."

A daily pint can keep the inches at bay, says scientist

BY JEREMY LAURANCE, HEALTH CORRESPONDENT

BEER has been unfairly blamed for increasing the girth of generations of drinkers, an expert in analytical chemistry claims.

The merits of beer have been missed because of its undeserved association with large, pot-bellied men propping up bars. A pint a day could even be the basis of a weight-loss diet, Professor David Williams of the University of Wales, Cardiff, says.

Beer is a "complete food" and its health benefits outweigh its dangers, he says. All the evidence was that those who drink moderate amounts live longer.

The large abdomens developed by some heavy drinkers were not attributable to beer itself but reflected the effect of alcohol as an appetite stimulant and as an anaesthetic. "Alcohol numbs your stomach, so you can't always tell when it is full," Professor Williams says.

For most people even the effect of the appetite stimulants

ever and no sugar, but worthwhile amounts of carbohydrate, protein and vitamins. It is 99 per cent water, providing an important source of the four pints of water a day required by the average person. It is healthier than soft drinks because it does not rot the teeth and contains low levels of additives and other contaminants, which are soaked up by the yeast used in fermentation and then discarded.

Writing in *Chemistry in Britain*, Professor Williams calls for an end to some of the myths surrounding a beverage which people have made and consumed since about 3,500 BC. As well as providing the right nutrition, beer has a relaxing effect that helps to reduce stress.

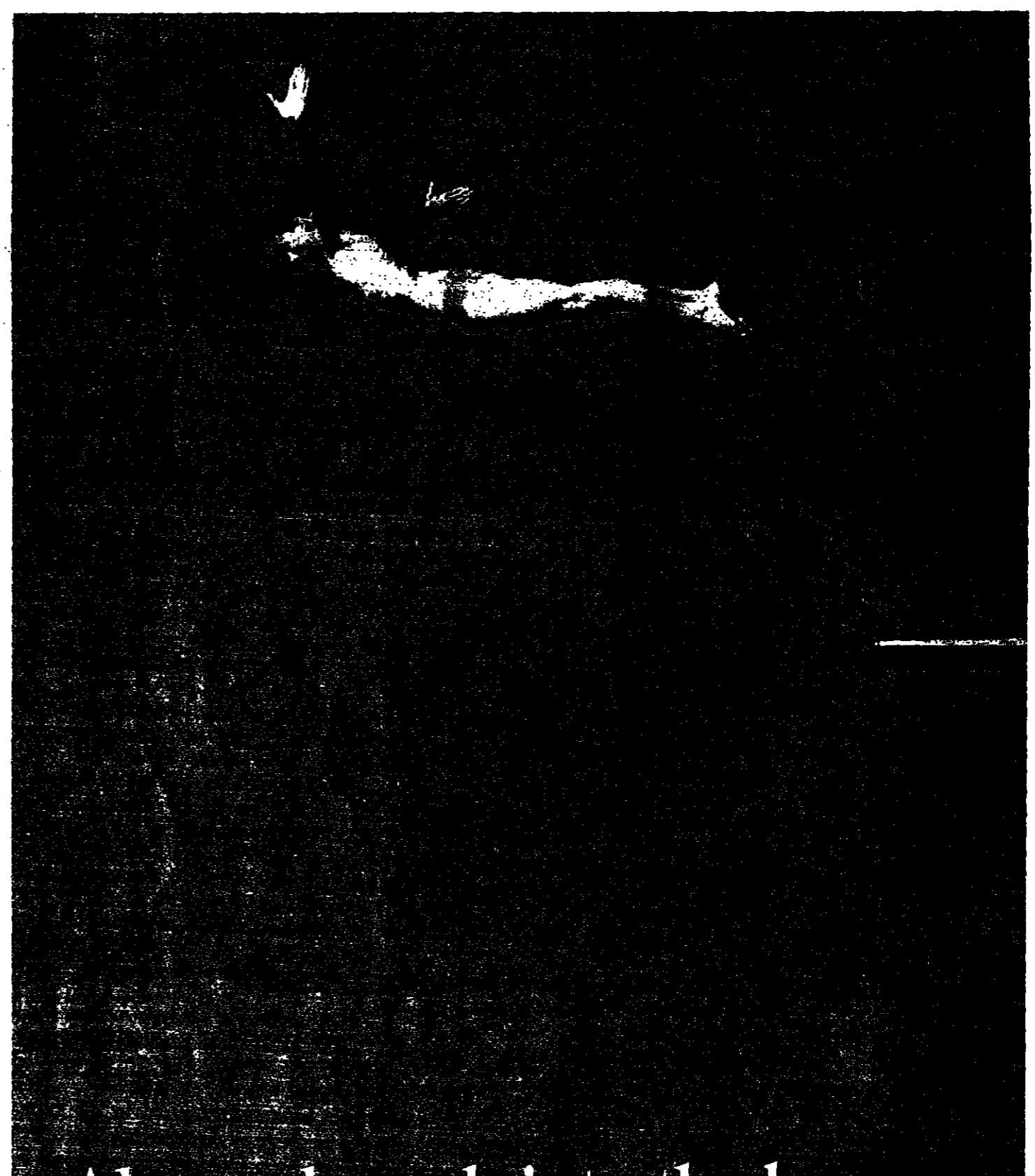
When used as part of a balanced diet, beer is beneficial for human health and the infrequent mishap resulting from a little over-indulgence is no reason to brand beer as contrary to our wellbeing."

Fat-bellied despite being beer drinkers

was offset by the carbon dioxide in beer, which encourages drinkers to take small quantities of food with pauses in between. Carbonated drinks also aid digestion by promoting acid production in the stomach and stimulating blood flow.

Beer contains no fat what-

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in Howard



Birthday in jail for veteran grammar schools campaigner



Sibley refuses to pay her council taxes

THE nation's dopest grammar school campaigner yesterday celebrated her 74th birthday in a cell at Holloway prison.

Joan Sibley received a visit from her husband Kenneth, 71. Holloway has become familiar to Mrs Sibley during a 27-year-battle with a local authority that failed to provide their children with a grammar school education.

Mrs Sibley is serving a 90-day sentence for failing to pay council tax. This is the latest chapter in a story that her husband says will probably be resolved only when they are both in their graves.

Although their children are well into their thirties, and the

walls of the Sibleys' home in Luton is covered with photographs of school-age grandchildren, the couple are fighting for what they believe is a principle.

The struggle, which has led four prison terms for Mrs Sibley and three for her husband, a retired British Aerospace engineer, started in the early 1970s when their daughters reached secondary school age. With no grammar school available, the Sibleys withdrew their children from school and did what they could to educate them at home.

After two years, Mr Sibley's failure to send his children to school earned him a week in prison and resulted in his daughters spending time in care. The publicity attracted a

benefactor who paid for the girls to attend a public school. When the Sibleys' son Duncan reached the same stage he, too, was withdrawn from school.

According to his parents, when Duncan was taken into care he was treated as though he were maladjusted. As the Sibleys prepared to sell their home to pay school fees, again a benefactor sent the boy to boarding school in Norfolk.

The two girls went on to get

degrees. Vanessa, 33, is married with three children and teaches English in Central America. Melanie, 37, is a personal assistant. Duncan, 33, is a BMW salesman.

With the end of the children's education, the Sibleys' battle was only just beginning. In 1989 the couple decided to stop paying local taxes, arguing that the local authority had failed to provide an education for their children and that their reputations and those of their children had been damaged by the periods in care and court battles.

"The local authorities had a duty of care and they failed in that duty. We wanted recognition that we had been dam-

aged by Luton," Mr Sibley said. "After our fourth petition to Parliament failed, we decided we were not prepared to pay them any taxes whatever and will not do so in the future."

Duncan Sibley said: "They acted in our best interest and there is a point of principle here. If Mum and Dad were like the average people in their seventies, I would be concerned. But they are both physically and mentally very active. This will not be detrimental to Mum."

Luton Borough Council said: "We are bound by law to collect council tax from everybody in the borough. We go to court only as a matter of last

resort because we would much rather come to an arrangement for repayment."

"Unfortunately, in spite of our efforts, every year payment has been refused and therefore we have been forced to refer the matter to the magistrates' court. Here, the process of law takes over. But even then, imprisonment is a matter of last resort for the magistrates."

Mr Sibley said: "We are angered, not bitter. The bitterness has faded into the background. This is a matter of principle and we are not going to be pushed around by anyone. There will be no surrender. This looks like a coffin job."

Restaurateur and family die as fire sweeps flat

By JOANNA BALE

A COUPLE and their three young children died yesterday morning when fire destroyed their second-floor flat above their Indian restaurant.

Shaghara Miah, 41, his wife Rukshana Akther, 25, and their three children Mishkatath, 4, Shamir, 17 months, and Mary, two months, were killed when the blaze swept through their home in Palmers Green, north London, just after 7am.

Two men who lived in the first floor flat, where the fire is believed to have started accidentally, escaped and raised the alarm. Firefighters wearing breathing apparatus rescued the three children and attempts were made to resuscitate them, but they were pronounced dead on arrival at hospital.

Because of the intense heat and smoke, the firefighters were unable to get to Mr Miah and his wife and their bodies remained in the flat yesterday while fire officers investigated the cause of the blaze.

Mr Miah, believed to be of Bangladeshi origin, was co-owner of Dipali Tandoori



A distraught cousin of the dead family arriving at the scene of the fire yesterday in which Rukshana Akther, below, died with her husband and children. Her daughter Mishkatath is pictured holding baby Shamir.



have started in the first-floor flat above the restaurant and spread into the second floor. At this stage we are not treating it as suspicious."

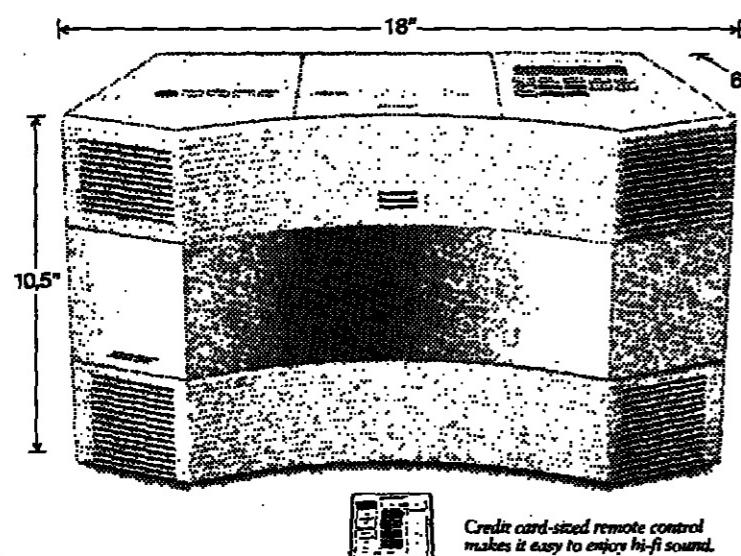
It was not possible to say whether there were smoke alarms in the building because of the amount of damage, said the spokesman.

In 1994 a businessman,

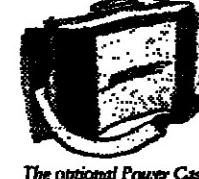
George Abraham, who was a regular customer, missed his favourite curries so much that he spent £750 to fly from his Moscow base for a meal at the Dipali restaurant. Later he paid £300 to have his ten favourite curries flown to Russia.

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دعا من الله

BALLOT

THE TIMES GUIDE TO ELECTION ISSUES

6. Welfare reform

Providing a fair deal at an affordable price

ASK people what issues will determine their vote at the next election, and they are likely to mention the public-service end of the welfare state — health and education — rather than the benefit system. Yet social security will be critical at this election for two reasons.

First, the social security bill now costs each working adult £15 per working day. It accounts for nearly a third of government spending and, until recently, has been growing faster than the economy's ability to pay for it. So each time that politicians talk about cutting taxes or holding down public spending, voters should ask whether they have thought of ways of restricting the growth in the largest single element of public expenditure, social security. Welfare reform is the flipside of tax cuts. And

even if it does not feature prominently on the hustings, it will have to be high on the list of any incoming government's priorities. Whichever party wins will have to tackle the costs of welfare, but neither wants to shout about it. Any reform is likely to hit the pockets of the middle classes, whose votes they so assiduously court.

Since today's welfare state was created, just after the war, social security spending has risen eight-fold in real terms. Even though the economy has also grown fast, spending on benefits as a percentage of national income has risen even faster: from 4.7 per cent in 1949-50 to 12.1 per cent now.

The factors driving this growth are demographic (more old people living for longer); social (family

breakdown and more lone parents); and economic (higher unemployment). Government policy too has played a part: instead of building council houses for the poor, a bill paid by the Department of the Environment, the Government has preferred to pay them housing benefit, a cost met by the Department for Social Security.

Since none of these pressures is likely to diminish, and since the public is unwilling to pay higher taxes to cover them, the big question is which party is most likely to be successful at reining in the growth of social security without forcing people into destitution or hugely increasing the numbers of the poor. The Tories claim that they are the instinctive tax and spending cutters, while Labour is in hock to the poverty lobby. Yet

Tony Blair has made welfare reform one of his top stated priorities for government.

Mr Blair claims that, like Nixon visiting China, only a party of the Left can be trusted to take on the welfare state. It is certainly true that other, modern-thinking left-wing governments in countries such as America, New Zealand and Australia have made bold reforms to social security. Throughout the Anglo-Saxon world, socialists and their successors have moved in the past decade from backing higher benefit payouts to wanting to help people off welfare altogether. "A hand-up, not a hand-out" is now a well-used phrase.

The Labour Party's journey from

hand-out to hand-up has been conducted under Mr Blair. At the last general election, its biggest spending pledge was to increase child benefit and pensions, paid for by raising taxes on the rich and not so rich. Because the poor comprised mainly families with children and the old; this was thought to be a "socially just" and efficient way of tackling poverty.

Now there is no talk from Labour of raising the level of benefits, least of all "universal" ones such as child benefit and pensions to which the rich are also entitled. Instead, the catchphrase is "welfare-to-work". Labour promises to spend the proceeds of its windfall tax on the utilities on helping 250,000 young and long-term unemployed off the dole and back into work.

The young will be offered a

choice of four opportunities: a private-sector job with subsidy paid to the employer; education or training; a place on an environmental task force or a job with a voluntary organisation. Critically, if they refuse all of these, they surrender 40 per cent of their benefits. "Rights and responsibilities" is the other tough slogan.

Labour also wants to get lone parents with school-age children back to work and is promising to increase the network of after-school and holiday clubs to solve the parents' childcare problem.

The Conservatives are concerned about social security spending too. Peter Lilley has reformed the system in a piecemeal way (see below), which together should save £6 billion a year by 2000 and £15 billion by 2020. Opposition to

these changes has been token: Labour has privately been content to let the Tories do such dirty work.

Would another Conservative term deliver reforms on the same scale as Labour? So far, recent Tory policies have been similar to those of Labour — a "workfare" scheme here, a project for lone parents there — but they have mainly been in the form of pilots and the workfare is expected to be self-financing. Labour, it seems, might devote more energy and money to the problem.

So there is a choice. A Labour government could be hampered by the Left and its associated lobbies, but it would have welfare reform as one of its flagship policies. A Tory government would have more freedom for manoeuvre but possibly less momentum.

Tories have changed the benefit balance

WHAT is the measure of success when judging a government's record on social security? Should it be the extent to which ministers have curbed the growth in spending? Or should it be whether poverty has been alleviated?

The purpose of social security, after all, is to ensure that those who cannot work do not starve or freeze. It is a sign of a developed or civilised society that the least fortunate are not allowed to become destitute. And as well as redistributing money from the rich to the poor, social security acts as a savings bank over people's lifetime: they put money into the system when they are earning and withdraw it when they are not, either because they are retired, disabled, looking after children on their own, or unemployed.

The problem for any government is that the budget is "demand-led" — that is, anyone who is eligible for a benefit can claim it. This means that the Treasury cannot limit the total spending: and if unemployment rises faster than expected, or the rate of divorce increases, then the social security budget can balloon out of control.

Labour's chief charge against the Conservatives' public spending record is that expenditure on areas such as education has suffered at the expense of increases in social security or "rescue" spending. It is certainly true that the social security bill has increased hugely in the 18 years of Tory rule — by 85 per cent in real terms (see chart). But the Tories could justifiably claim that, had it not been for their policies, the bill would be larger still today.

By far the biggest change to the system that the Conservatives have made in the past 18 years has been to link benefits broadly to prices rather than earnings. The savings will amount to £3.6 billion a year

THE RECORD

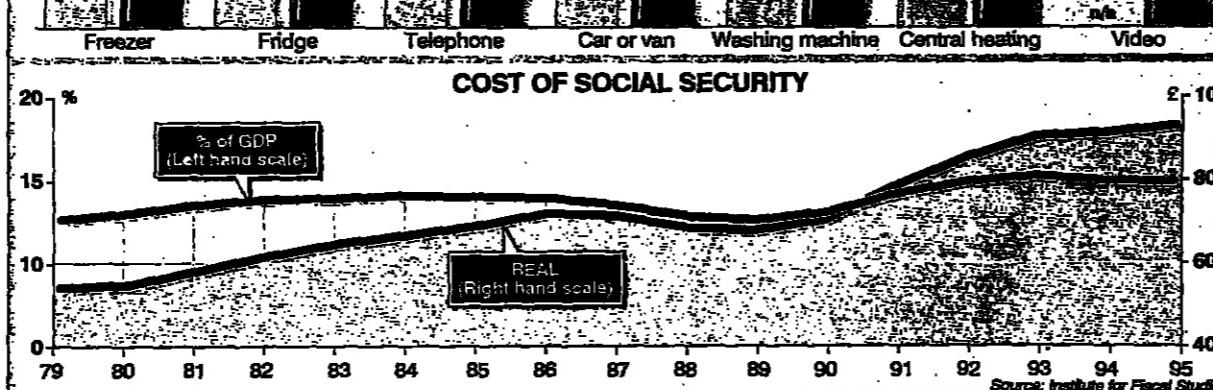
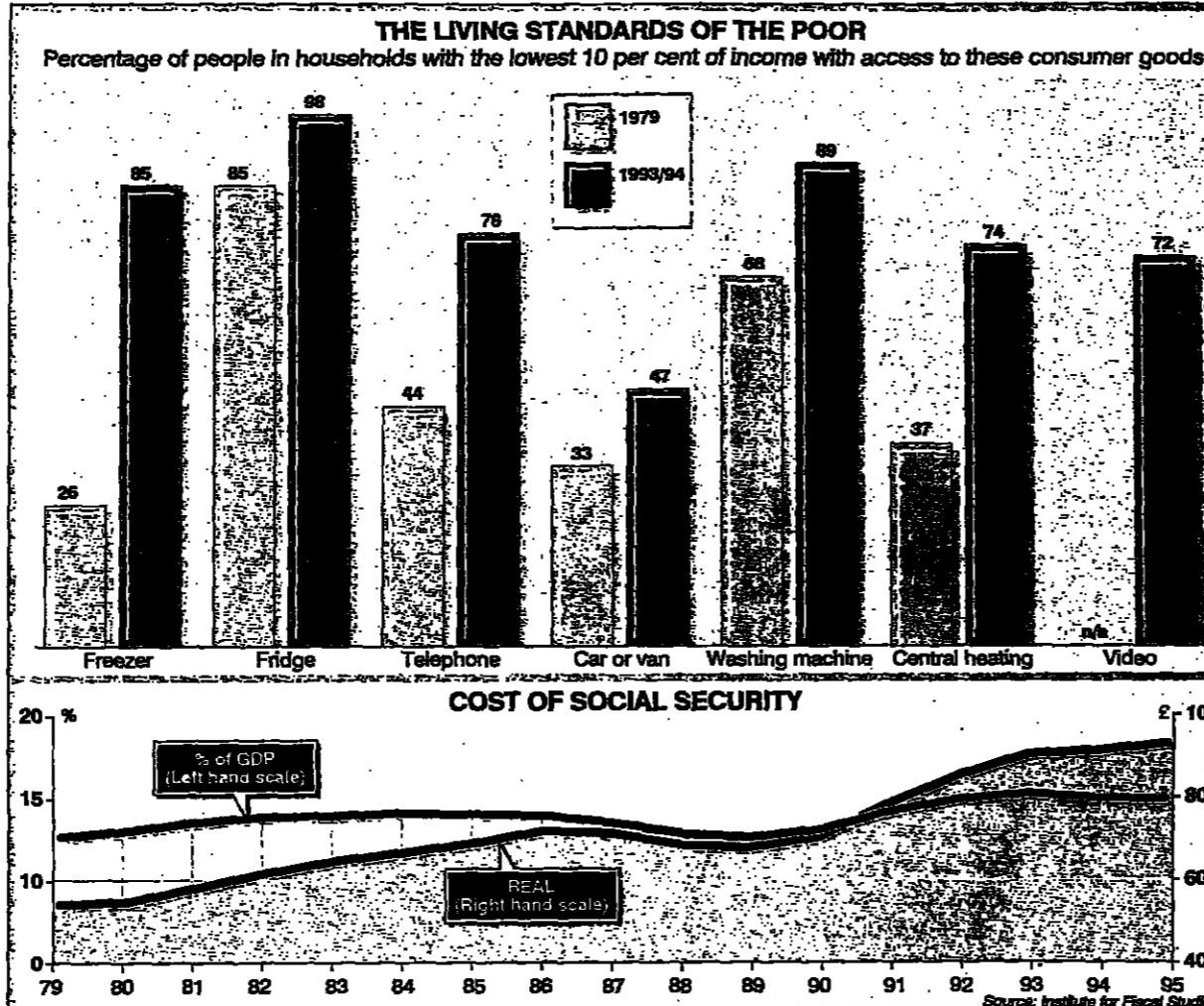
by 1997-98. Had the state pension continued to be pegged to earnings, it would be worth £23.50 a week more. But pensioners are richer now because of their own savings and second pensions.

The result of price-linking is that benefits are now much more "targeted" — that is, they are aimed more at the poor. The basic state pension is so low that those pensioners who have no other income have to be topped up with income support, a means-tested benefit. Child benefit too has been raised only in line with prices (and between 1988 and 1990 it was frozen).

Pensions and child benefit are the two main "universal" benefits, which go to rich and poor alike. Because they are being allowed to constitute an ever smaller share of income, in the long run, they will wither on the vine. Indeed, Michael Portillo has already warned the under-40s that the state pension they can expect will be "nugatory".

This change has had two effects. First, it has made the social security system far more progressive: that is, it takes more money from the rich and gives it to the poor. It is now less of an insurance system, to which people pay premiums to get money back later. Those on above-average incomes will pay in far more than they will receive, unless they suddenly fall on hard times. More than ever, the benefit system now relies on altruism rather than self-interest.

The price-linking of benefits has also contributed to income inequality (see chart). Although the income of the bottom 10 per cent of earners in real terms has not fallen in real terms, the average income has risen by 39 per cent and top incomes by 59 per cent.



CONSERVATIVES



Pensions: basic pension will probably remain universal and linked to prices. Private pensions will be encouraged. Women to retire, like men, at 65 from 2020, with higher pensions for women who defer retirement for longer.

Child benefit: likely to remain universal and uprated in line with inflation.

Welfare to work: extension of "workfare" schemes, speeding up Family Credit payments, helping with childcare, paying housing benefit and council tax benefit for first four weeks in work, plus back-to-work bonus.

Long parents: continue efforts to make fathers contribute. Possible extension of Parent Plus pilot, which uses private sector to find jobs for lone parents. Will pay benefits at same rate to lone and married parents from April 1998.

Disability: implementing Disability Discrimination Act, which outlaws unjustifiable discrimination against the disabled in goods and services. New incapacity benefit should go only to people genuinely incapable of work.

Housing benefit: will reform so that people out of work have same incentives to take account of their housing costs as people in a job.

Fraud: new Fraud Bill will allow comparison of tax and social security records. New Benefit Fraud Inspectorate will monitor local authority performance in tackling fraud.

LABOUR



Pensions: state pension continues to be universal. Encourage second pensions with introduction of "stakeholder" pension. May integrate tax and benefits for pensioners.

Child benefit: may be scrapped for 16 to 18-year-olds still at school and paid as "educational allowance" to teenagers from poor families. Could be taxed for higher-rate payers.

Welfare to work: windfall levy will pay for 250,000 under-25s to come off benefit and into work. All young unemployed for more than six months will be offered jobs or training, and will have to accept or suffer benefit cut. National insurance holiday for employers to take on long-term unemployed. Job centres and benefit offices to merge.

Long parents: those with school-age children will be helped to find a job. After-school clubs to help mothers match working hours with school hours.

Disability: review eligibility of Incapacity Benefit.

Housing benefit: welfare to work measures should reduce housing benefit bill.

Long-term care: currently "a lottery" depending on where people live. Develop national guidelines.

Fraud: crack down on housing benefit fraud by landlords with new offence of organised landlord fraud.

LIBERAL DEMOCRATS



Pensions: basic pension will remain universal. Pension top-up benefits will replace Income Support for the age group. Retirement age will be flexible over a ten-year period.

Child benefit: universal child benefit until the age of 18. £5 increase per week per family, funded by phasing out Married Couple's Allowance.

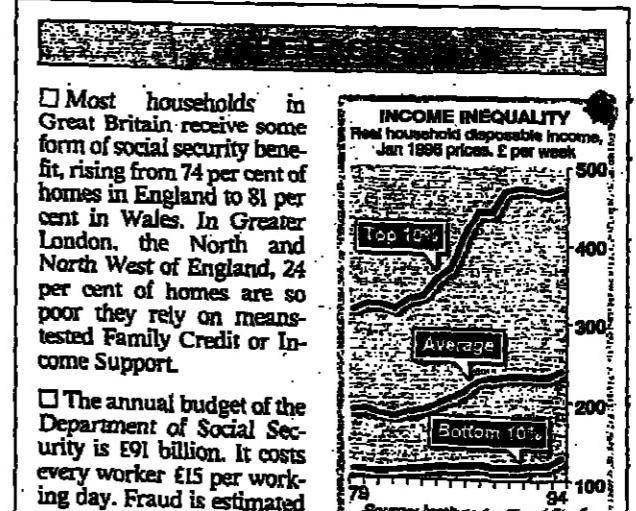
Welfare to work: 50 per cent top rate tax enabling up to £50,000 to be taken out of the tax system at the bottom end and other measures to reduce the poverty trap. Simplified low income benefit. Benefits transferred to employer for first two years of employment.

Long parents: encourage lone parents to work by providing nursery education for all 3 and 4-year-olds and extending tax relief on work-place nurseries to other forms of child care. Retain single parent benefits and reform CSA.

Disability: replace Incapacity Benefit with comprehensive support system. Increase support for carers.

Housing benefit: decrease contribution to poverty trap by removing it at a slower rate. Provide loans for people to pay deposits on tenancies. Introduce a new Mortgage Benefit to provide 100 per cent assistance to low-income families.

Fraud: support the Government's Fraud Bill, although concerned about the civil liberty implications of data matching — records being compared across departments.



risen from 18 per cent in 1979 to 31 per cent in 1993-94. The rise in all households where no adult of working age receives a wage was 8 per cent, to 17 per cent.

Six in ten male employees in Great Britain are in an occupational pension scheme while nearly three in ten have a personal pension. Pakistanis and Bangladeshis are the ethnic group least likely to have extra provision for old age.



SUES

price

ME POLITICIANS



Paul Gascoigne celebrates with a recreation of the "dentist's chair" drinking incident.



Clissold Park Rangers raise the level of celebration with a choreographed routine

IT WAS an exceptional display of choreography — especially considering the venue. On the windswept wastes of Hackney Marshes in east London, the Sunday footballers of Clissold Park Rovers raised goal celebrations to new artistic heights after scoring against Daz Automatic, their Thames League Third Division rivals.

As the ball went into the net the jubilant Rovers ran forward, lifted their triumphant striker aloft and paired off in a series of balletic lifts, spins and twirls that would not have been entirely amiss on the stage at Covent Garden. The manoeuvres, designed to bring new standards of creativity and discipline to the art of football celebrations, got two performances yesterday in a match that was drawn 2-2.

Pre-match training under the tuition of Kate Brown, a modern dance choreographer, enabled the Rovers to bring a touch of class to their celebratory rituals that their untutored rivals could not match. Ms Brown had been recruited by the football magazine FC to coach the Rovers in more imaginative and artistic ways of expressing their joy at scoring.

Although one attempted *pas de deux* crumpled ignominiously in the trampled mud of a gale-swept Pitch 17 after Rovers' first goal, the second performance was, everyone agreed, almost as satisfactory as the second goal itself. "Goal celebrations have been getting more and more imaginative," Peter Freedman, FC's editor, said. "Synchronised celebration is emerging as a performance art, not unlike formation dancing."

"All football is structured improvisation in movement."



Robin Young, a former ballet critic, reviews the style of a Sunday soccer team that has taken to choreographing its scoring celebrations

said Ms Brown, as she set about explaining her vision of the Rovers' celebratory future. "We are looking for a shared vocabulary of movements in response to unpredictable events."

Ms Brown, a founder member of an Irish dance group called the Hairy Marys, was chosen to raise the standards of Clissold Park Rovers' hitherto ragged and rather occasional celebrations because her previous work included an avant-garde fusion of football and dance.

That was performed partly by dancers and partly by footballers, first on a football pitch and then in a theatre. It was called *Over Two Legs*, to echo the concept of football as a "game of two halves".

Clissold Park Rovers were chosen as beneficiaries of her expertise, not because of any exceptional scoring ability (they are half way up their league at present, but already out of the cup), but because their captain, Clive Butty, is a journalist and one of FC's contributing editors.

Another team member is Ivor Baddele, brother of the comedian, David. "You do not need *Fantasy Football League*, when this is going on," he commented, as he practised lifting a hefty teammate as though he were the legume dancer, Darcey Bussell. "This is fantasy enough."

The goal celebration craze started with Roger Milla provocatively shimmying to the corner flag when he scored for Cameroon in the 1990 World Cup. It took definitive hold in Britain when Jurgen Klinsmann first performed his swallow-dive before the crowd after scoring for Spurs.

Since then there has been: Middlesbrough's Fabrizio Ravanelli pulling his shirt over his head; Lee Sharpe's Elvis Presley impressions at Manchester United; Paul Merson's elbow-bending drinker imitations for Arsenal; Paul Gascoigne's re-enactment of the dentist's chair drinking bout scandal and Chelsea's gladiatorial poses. Non-league clubs rushed to improve on their seniors' efforts, most famously with Aylesbury United's duckling waddle, and Kingstonians' "dying fly" routine.

"Whatever the professionals are up to, the Sunday league players try to imitate," Michael Jacobs, publisher of FC, said. "There is something pretty ridiculous about doing

that routine should involve the whole team, and her suggestions were well received by the players, though their efforts as a *coup de ballet* were much handicapped by uneven conditions underfoot and a howling gale.

"I feel like a star. I love it," said striker Silvo Kirati, a coffee bar supervisor, as he was lifted by his team-mates a ninth time in practice sessions. The choreographer might have missed a trick, though. The most notorious episode in Clissold Park Rovers' short career to date is the goal

Michael Baker, a barrister in his day job, scored against Daz Automatic last year.

On that occasion he deflected the ball into the net with what footballers traditionally refer to as the "groin". Staggering around the pitch clutching their crotches might, after all, have been more within the Rovers' Terpsichorean abilities than the relatively complicated co-ordinated contact improvisation techniques Ms Brown chose to adopt.

Football, 28-31



Dancer: Kate Brown

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دعا

US puts 'modest' \$35bn price tag on Nato expansion

By TOM RHODES IN WASHINGTON AND OUR FOREIGN STAFF

THE White House, facing growing Russian opposition to the swift expansion of Nato, today presents a report to Congress designed to bolster American policy and calm critics at home and abroad.

Offering a moderate assessment of American costs for extending the alliance, the study on strategic security in Europe aims to send a message to Moscow that Nato forces will not establish large new military installations close to the Russian border.

"There would be no need to station substantial Nato forces on the territories of new members," the report says.

The Administration estimates costs for Nato expansion, including the upgrading of armed forces, integration into the alliance command structure and the collective air defence system, at \$35 billion (£22 billion) over the next 12 years.

During that time, the study

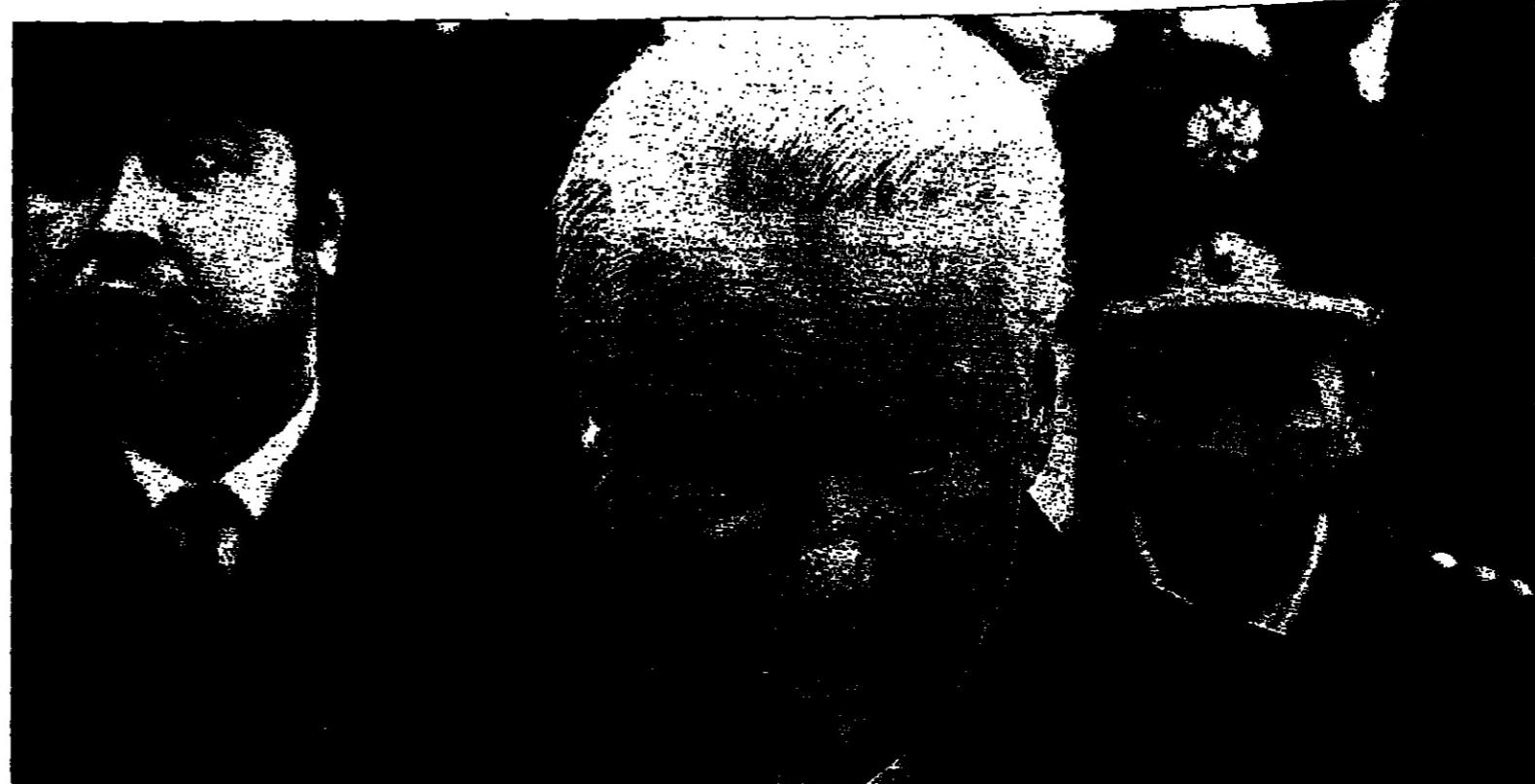
said, the United States was expected to contribute no more than \$2.5 billion, about \$200 million a year and a very small part of America's \$263 billion defence budget.

The report, obtained by *The Washington Post*, said the costs were variable but affordable and emphasised that failure to expand Nato would threaten the interests of the United States.

"It would diminish the alliance's relevance and vigour and would falsely validate Europe's old Cold War divisions at a time when Western policy is committed to overcome them," it said.

The cost projections only cover the first group of new members, Poland, the Czech Republic and Hungary, which are expected to be invited to join Nato at the Madrid summit in July.

The report appears only weeks after George Kennan, the American eminence grise



President Yeltsin talks to journalists close to the Kremlin yesterday in his first public appearance since the New Year. The Russian President, who was at a wreath-laying ceremony to mark Defenders of the Fatherland Day, said he was fully recovered from illness and ready to take on his opponents (Robin Lodge writes). "All that remains is to regain my strength," said the 66-year-old President who suffered a bout of pneumonia in January, just two months after heart surgery. Mr Yeltsin said he had lost 57lb, confirming the impression left by his gaunt appearance, which contrasts so strikingly with the hefty figure he cut in the past. Yesterday he walked steadily, although slowly and spoke clearly and energetically. Asked about recent

Yeltsin makes a 'fighting' return

attempts in the State Duma, the lower house of parliament, to have him removed from office on health grounds, he gave a warning that he was prepared to strike back. "This is a purely political, communist campaign," he said. "But they should know that I am a fighter and will remain a fighter. And they should be

careful not to attack me too hard, because I can hit back." Mr Yeltsin, who has been convalescing since his release from hospital, did not say when he would be returning to full-time work. Doctors treating him have advised him against hurrying to resume a full schedule. But other than a few token trips, Mr Yeltsin has been away from his Kremlin desk ever since his heart trouble in early July.

Fears of Rock fall after rain in Spain

By TUNKU VARADARAJAN
IN MADRID

A SERIES of avalanches in Gibraltar, each hurling hundreds of large boulders onto roads, tunnels and beaches, has prompted fears that the Rock's famed cliffs may be in danger of crumbling.

Although rockfalls are routine in Gibraltar, the latest examples have produced the largest tonnage of debris in the colony's history.

Torrential rains in December, which gave Gibraltar and the neighbouring Spanish region of Andalusia their wettest period since the turn of the century, appear to have greatly weakened the limestone cliffs formed 20 million years ago when a tectonic shift caused Africa to collide with Europe.

Ten days ago, at Camp Bay, on the western side of the Rock, a large slab of cliff came hurtling down, blocking a tunnel which provides access to a popular beach. Earlier in the month, a rockfall near Catalan Bay, situated on the northeast near the water catchment area, was the scene of a disconcerting avalanche. Altogether, about 20,000 tonnes of rock are estimated to have fallen this year alone.

The Gibraltar Government has called in geological surveyors from Britain, who will submit their findings by the end of the week to the colony's chief civil engineer. Emergency measures will then be taken, including the use of wire nets to rein in rocks and debris.

Local experts, however, are anxious to play down fears of a "collapsing Gibraltar". Clive Finlayson, the director of the Gibraltar Museum, says: "The Rock will survive these avalanches, as it has done others in the past."

Dr Finlayson attributes the latest rockfalls to a combination of heavy rain and indiscriminate quarrying which took place at the turn of the century, when material was needed to build the dockyards.

Starr says Clinton's aide 'not murdered'

By TOM RHODES

VINCENT FOSTER, the close confidant of Bill Clinton found dead in a park outside Washington nearly four years ago, was not murdered and there was no cover-up by the President or Hillary Clinton, according to an unreleased report by Kenneth Starr, the Whitewater prosecutor.

In an apparent attempt to restore credibility to Mr Starr's investigation after he first announced his resignation and then his decision to remain as independent counsel last week, his office appealed to have leaked the report to the *Los Angeles Times* yesterday.

The document claims that an exhaustive inquiry into the events surrounding Foster's death rejected repeated conspiracy theories that the former deputy White House counsel had been murdered.

The White House has consistently maintained that Foster, found shot at Fort Marcy Park on June 20, 1993, committed suicide and that his death was not connected with Whitewater investigations.

His death has remained the focus of numerous allegations ranging from murder to assaults by Israeli Intelligence and the Whitewater prosecutor's report may do little to blunt continuing speculation that the Clintons were involved in a cover-up.



Foster: found shot dead in a park in June 1993

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The facts be

New scheme launched to help people who get a raw deal from medical insurance

RESEARCH has shown that, among the 5.7 million in Britain with private medical insurance, one group tends to pay more yet claim less.

They are usually in one of the Professions or work for themselves. Generally fit and healthy, without being fanatical about it, they follow a responsible, healthy lifestyle, take exercise, are careful about their diet, don't smoke or smoke very little, and consume alcohol well within the recommended levels. Probably they have taken very few days off work over the years.

But, by virtue of their work, if illness should strike, they cannot afford to be away sick for any length of time, and most have families depending on them.

So they tend to opt for the certainty provided by fully comprehensive private medical cover. They find that so-called 'budget schemes' offer too many restrictions; such as no out-patient cover, private treatment only if the NHS cannot treat them within 6 weeks, or there is a restricted hospitals list.

But comprehensive schemes are not cheap and, like all medical insurance, the subscriptions continue to rise much faster than general inflation. So there is unease in this group, faced with a 'Catch 22'. Their work situation and personal responsibilities mean they need more cover than a budget scheme would provide, yet their lifestyle makes them far less likely to make claims.

This is precisely why Western Provident Association, one of Britain's largest and longest established private medical insurers, have designed a unique scheme specifically to meet the demands of this important group - the 2-4-1 health insurance plan.

WPA 2-4-1 gives two important advantages within one scheme.
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the security you need.

The principle behind 2-4-1, like all good ideas, is very simple. It's called 'shared risk' and asks subscribers to decide how much responsibility they want to take upon themselves by paying a proportion of the annual cost of any private treatment from their own resources.

This has two important effects. Depending on how much subscribers choose to pay towards their treatment in any one year, they can save as much as 75% on a typical annual premium of the highly competitive 'Oak' scheme - Western Provident's top-of-the-range comprehensive medical insurance policy. It is therefore an even higher percentage saving on other companies' more expensive policies. For Western Provident's new 2-4-1 scheme provides unlimited cover for any costs over and above the subscriber's agreed shared-risk contribution. With the cost of an intermediate operation with a stay in hospital likely to be more than £5,000, this makes 2-4-1 a very good deal indeed. What's more, because 2-4-1 is restricted to people with a responsible attitude towards their health, Western Provident are confident that future price rises will be significantly less than other schemes.

Western Provident 2-4-1 at a glance

- You choose to carry part of the annual cost of private treatment. This can be the first £2,000, £4,000 or even just £1,000 for the year the policy runs. The saving on your premium depends on which figure you choose. £1,000 saves 33%, £2,000 saves 50%, and the maximum £4,000 saves 75% - all against the premiums of a comprehensive medical insurance policy. You can ask for your shared risk to be increased or decreased at each renewal time.
- 2-4-1 will provide unlimited cover for any cost over and above your personal liability, providing that the medical condition has not been excluded by our medical underwriters at the time of your application and your claim is within the rules of the plan.
- No medical examination is required, but you will be asked to complete an application form giving details of your medical history. 2-4-1 is available for married couples and families, but the shared risk is per person. Children up to 21 can be covered, but with a much lower shared risk figure of only £250.
- WPA will give you every assistance if you are moving to 2-4-1 from another insurer, but may exclude any existing medical conditions.
- 2-4-1 is not available to anyone aged 55 and over, but renewals will be accepted after this age.

For such an important decision, you may wish to know more. Please do not hesitate to phone us, without charge or obligation on the number below. We promise we will not contact you in any way, except at your request, but will send a confirmatory letter following your call. A trained advisor is available to visit you, but only if you ask for one.

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- When you receive your policy documents, if you are in any way dissatisfied, you can cancel within 14 days with no obligations.
- WPA will never cancel your policy or raise your premiums on the grounds that you have made too many claims. You may make as many eligible claims as you need.
- You are entitled to renew your WPA policy every year, as long as you have abided by the rules and the policy is still generally available.
- In the unlikely event of a disputed claim WPA agrees to be bound by the decision of the Insurance Ombudsman.



Typical examples of 2-4-1

Dick Murray is in a professional occupation, in his early forties, married with one child, living in London. His annual 2-4-1 family policy premium would be £826 (compared to the £3,600 he would be paying now for a typical top-of-the-range comprehensive medical insurance policy) if he elected to take a £4,000 risk share. He would benefit from a saving of £2,774 every year.

Emma Jones is in her mid-forties, lives in the North of England, with 'Scale 1' London cover. The premium rates for 2-4-1 are determined by where you live and unlike most PMI plans you have access to all private hospitals - there is no restricted list. Miss Jones, if she opted to pay the first £2,000, would save herself approximately £1,200 on the cost of a typical top-of-the-range comprehensive medical insurance policy.

2-4-1 not only provides unlimited cover for any costs over their agreed contributions, but, because it is a top-of-the-range scheme, Mr. Murray and Miss Jones have access to over 650 hospitals nationwide, including some of the most famous establishments in London and the Provinces. (There are no restrictions on your choice of hospital).

Most people maintain a medical insurance policy for between five years and ten years. As 2-4-1 savings occur every year, Mr. Murray will save (assuming he remained healthy) between £13,870 and £27,740, and Miss Jones between £6,000 and £12,000, without any interest on these sums! This they could either save for their long term care, put into a medical savings account (msa), use for school fees, top up pension contributions, or they could invest their savings to build up a nest egg with the interest.

For some, their annual 2-4-1 premium would be the same as they now pay each month for their top-of-the-range comprehensive medical insurance policy.

At the same time, they know the guaranteed limit of how much they might have to find in one year if the unexpected happens and they need medical treatment. 2-4-1 will pay any costs above that point.

Price Comparison of some Top-of-the-Range Private Medical Insurance (PMI)

Company	Product	Price*
WPA	Oak	from £ 908.16 S
Bupa	Bupa Care	from £1,092.42 S
Prime Health	PrincenCare Plus Gold	from £1,193.85 S
Clinicare	Carte Blanche	from £1,382.64 S
PPP Healthcare	Platinum	from £2,336.18 S
WPA	2-4-1 with £2,000 shared risk	from £ 259.14 depending on where you live.

* price based upon a single policyholder aged 40 next birthday. Excluding any excess premium reductions.

Source: Money Marketing December 1996

The facts behind the rising cost of medical insurance

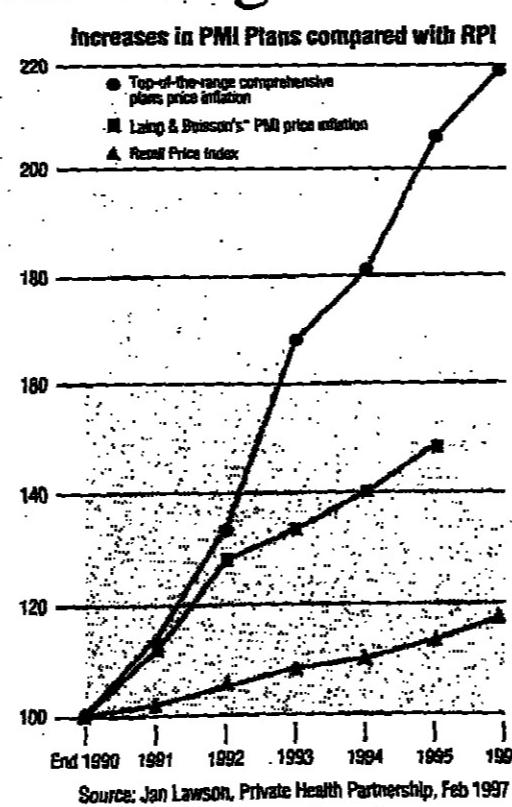
"It is inequitable that subscribers who follow a healthy lifestyle and make few claims are faced with rising premiums due partly to claims by others. We were determined to find a solution. We've introduced 2-4-1 to give them a real choice."

All those who join 2-4-1 will find themselves in a like-minded group of those who look after their health and mutually benefit by saving on their premiums."

"Medical inflation" is considerably higher than general inflation. This is due to a number of factors.

We live in an age of continual advances in medicine. Knee replacements, heart bypasses, cataract removals with lens implants are just some of the now common-place operations. There are also major innovations in diagnostic techniques. But every medical advance creates extra cost.

Because of these advances people are living longer and have higher expectations from



medical care. This is the problem faced by the National Health Service, creating financial problems and waiting lists.

The cost of private treatment has risen faster than NHS costs as there is no buffer of rationing by waiting lists. In fact, those with private medical insurance relieve the burden on the NHS and reduce waiting lists. 20% of all coronary heart bypass operations are carried out privately.

The growing expectations of a medical remedy for practically every ill, plus the funding difficulties of the NHS, means that people with health insurance now make more claims than ever before, particularly for minor illnesses and medical conditions.

The principles of insurance are straightforward: the claims of the few are met by the premiums of the many. More claims mean higher premiums. 2-4-1 points the way out of that continuing situation.

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Germans grumble at euro but no popular revolt will save mark

MANY people in Germany share British misgivings about a European single currency. Malcolm Rifkind told the German newspaper *Bild* last week. In one sense, the Foreign Secretary speaks a simple truth; but in another, his claim is misleading.

If you combine the German public's hostility to the euro with grim jobless figures and eroding strike over cutting back Germany's generous welfare state, you could easily assume that a grassroots rebellion will derail Helmut Kohl's dream of monetary union in 1999. Retired central bankers like Mr Wilhelm



Nölling who threaten court cases to abort the birth of the euro strengthen this impression.

But having just spent a week criss-crossing Germany giving lectures, I am sure that

this assumption is false. Germans are certainly worried, and rightly so; the odds stack heavily against the new money imitating the solid, long-term success of the post-war mark. All sorts of legal and political hiccups can occur. Leading German economists are queuing up to point out that Germany can only qualify under the single currency rules with the help of some very creative accountancy. Herr Kohl might decide that the whole project is not ripe and should be delayed, but I wouldn't bank on it.

There is grumbling everywhere against Herr Kohl's

stubborn obsession with abstract Europe at the expense of jobs. A financial adviser remarked that people were taking their savings out of German marks and into Swiss francs again.

One of the country's senior bankers, himself closely involved in the technical preparation for the euro, told me that he thought the political underpinning for the currency was dangerously fragile. Yet whatever else happens, a popular revolt will not. The Germans take pride in their resilience. Whatever occurs, they pick themselves up, dust

themselves off and start competing all over again. They are enduring recessionary pain which would have broken other European economies to set the eastern segment of the country back on its feet. So it should be with the euro.

German history overlays this with a curious fatalism. A patronising professor from west Germany who now works in the east told me without embarrassment that after being ruled by Prussia, Adolf Hitler and Communists, east Germans had acquired a habit of deference to authority called *Obrigkeit denken*, a willingness to accept that distant power was both wise and unaccountable.

A hospital doctor reminded me that although Germans were terrified of hyperinflation, which had destroyed people's savings twice in living memory, they were also accustomed to abrupt changes of regimes and monies. During this century, west Germans have lived through the imperial, Weimar, Nazi and post-war democracy eras, each with their own currency. East Germans have used a fifth, the unlamented Ostmark of the communist era. No ordinary person exercised much choice in any of these changes.

as dictating the terms of reassurance to its neighbours, then the neighbours may not feel reassured.

These reflections make for a gloomy forecast, as I take my leave of this column. Germany's resigned outlook makes the single currency more likely to start. The euro will only work/economically if it partitions Europe politically; if all of Europe is included, the currency will collapse. Either way, it fails and the shock waves of that failure will be bad for the entire continent.

GEORGE BROCK

Netanyahu hires top lawyer over corruption inquiry

FROM CHRISTOPHER WALKER IN AMMAN AND ROSS DUNN IN JERUSALEM

THE Israeli Government's difficulties over a corruption scandal and plans to build a new Jewish settlement in east Jerusalem deepened yesterday as Binyamin Netanyahu, the Prime Minister, flew to Amman for peace talks.

Jordanian officials said later that King Hussein had given Mr Netanyahu a strong warning against proceeding with Har Homa, a settlement for 6,500 Jewish families. The future of the project is to be decided by the Israeli Cabinet tomorrow.

The King refused to give details of his criticisms but said: "I know how sensitive the issue of Jerusalem is and I hope nothing will happen to explode emotions."

Earlier yesterday, the opposition Labour Party called on supporters to begin preparing for an early election in the belief that the Netanyahu Government will fall. The Prime Minister has appointed one of Israel's top criminal lawyers, Yaakov Weinroth, amid reports that he has been questioned by police under caution about allegations that the ultra-orthodox Shas Party influenced the appointment of Ronnie Bar-on as Attorney-General.

"Not only is the Prime

Minister not tainted with any criminal act, he has not committed so much as a particle of a criminal act," Mr Weinroth said yesterday.

Under the alleged deal, Aryeh Deri, the Shas leader, was to have guaranteed that two Shas Cabinet ministers would support last month's accord transferring Hebron to Palestinian self-rule. In return, it was alleged, Mr Bar-on would have arranged a plea bargain for Mr Deri, who is on trial on fraud charges.

Israel's state-run Channel One television reported that last week Mr Netanyahu evaded questions from the police and replied to others by saying "I don't know", and "I don't remember".

The police then told the Prime Minister that he was being questioned "under warning", generally considered to be an indication that his replies could be used in legal proceedings.

Avigdor Kahalani, the Internal Security Minister believes the Government will have to resign and elections will be held if either Mr Netanyahu or Tzachi Hanegbi, the Justice Minister, is found to have been involved in the affair.

Mr Netanyahu was told by Yasser Arafat's Palestinian



Binyamin Netanyahu is surrounded by umbrellas at the funeral in Jerusalem's Har Herzl cemetery of Levy Eshkol, one of his predecessors as Israel's Prime Minister

Brothers charged over death of sisters

FROM ADAM SAGE
IN PARIS

TWO violent criminals recently released from prison were last night charged with murdering four young women.

The murders have provoked widespread demonstrations and criticism of lenient sentencing and will strengthen the hand of Jacques Toubon, the Justice Minister, whose plans to force sexual offenders to undergo treatment have run into strong opposition.

Jean-Michel Jourdain, 34, and his brother, Jean-Louis, 33, have accused each other of raping and strangling the four women near Boulogne on February 12. The bodies of Audrey Lamotte, 17, her sister, Isabelle, 20, Amélie Merlin, 20, and her sister, Peggy, 17, were found buried in sand dunes outside the town.

As the men were charged with sexual assault and murder, several hundred people demonstrated in the village of Otreau, where the dead women lived. Many of the demonstrators called for a return of the death penalty. Their demands were fuelled by the revelation that Jean-Michel Jourdain was freed from jail in 1995 after serving nine years of a 15-year sentence for killing a young girl. Jean-Louis Jourdain was released from prison in 1994 after serving seven years of a ten-year sentence for rape.

Thieves reel in priceless painting

FROM RICHARD OWEN
IN ROME

ITALIAN art authorities, already embarrassed by the wholesale haemorrhage of Old Masters and antiquities from Italy through theft and smuggling, yesterday disclosed that a priceless early 20th-century masterpiece by Gustav Klimt, the Viennese painter, had been stolen from a gallery in Piacenza.

Art gallery custodians discovered that Klimt's *Portrait of a Lady* was missing yesterday, but it is believed to have been stolen several days ago. Thieves got to the roof of the Modern Art Museum and dangled a wire with a hook on the end through a skylight, catching the picture and hauling it up. Then they cut the painting out of its frame, which was found abandoned on the roof.

Police said the gallery organisers had been preparing to move the painting to another gallery in Piacenza on temporary loan. Red-faced custodians said yesterday that they had noticed the painting's absence "some days ago", but had assumed it had been packed up ready for transportation and did not realise it had been stolen. Art experts said the painting was far too well-known to be sold on the open market and had "probably been stolen to commission".



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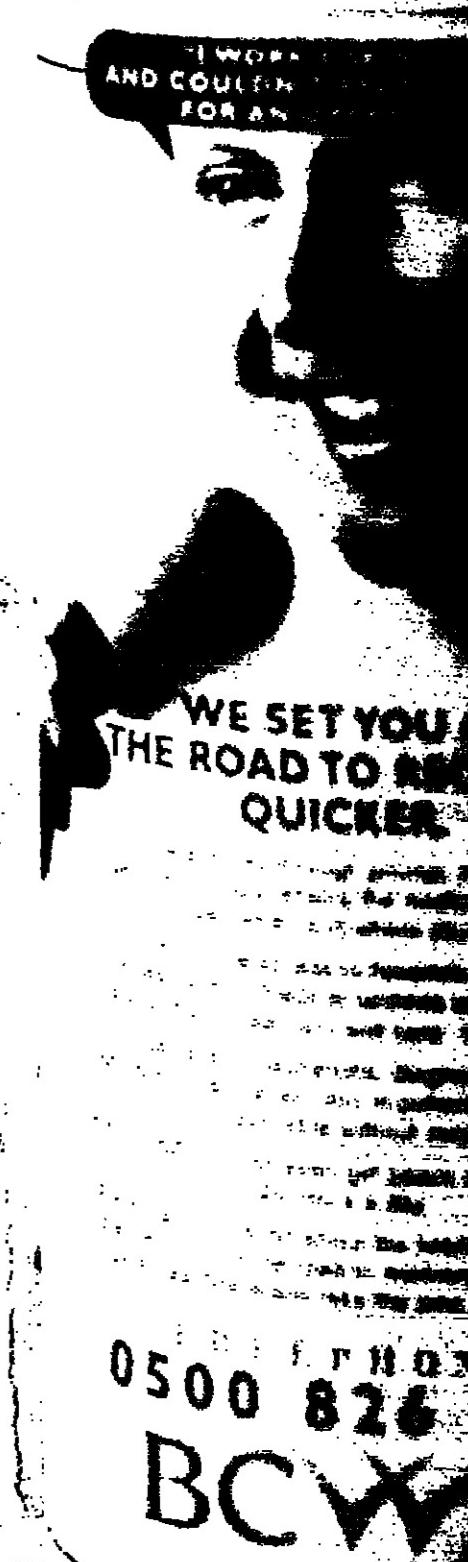
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THE TIMES MONDAY FEBRUARY 24 1997

Disgraced reformer Zhao barred from Deng ceremony

FROM JAMES PRINGLE IN BEIJING

AMID tensions and uncertainties here, Zhao Ziyang, the former Communist Party chief deposed during the Tiananmen demonstrations in June 1989 for sympathising with student protesters, has been banned from attending the private cremation today of Deng Xiaoping.

Mr Deng's successor, President Jiang Zemin, 70, has refused a special request by Mr Zhao, who lives under a form of house arrest here, to attend the ceremony at Babaoshan Revolutionary cemetery. Chinese sources said yesterday.

It has been suggested that Mr Zhao might be released and again play a role in government, although he is in his mid-seventies. However, Mr Jiang may see him as a potential challenger.

Soldiers in green uniforms yesterday practised carrying an empty glass coffin at the cemetery in western Beijing. Two officials said the preparations were for Mr Deng's cremation.

After the cremation, Mr Deng's ashes will be placed in an urn and presented to his widow and children before the official funeral ceremony tomorrow in front of 10,000



Zhao: request to attend Deng's funeral denied



Chinese soldiers carrying a glass coffin yesterday at Babaoshan cemetery in Beijing in rehearsal for the ceremony today at which Mr Deng's remains will be cremated

Last emperor leaves China with an empty throne

THE first time I saw Deng Xiaoping was in 1973, in the Great Hall of the People, when he was suddenly restored by Chairman Mao after years in the political and geographic wilderness, to which Mao had consigned him during the Cultural Revolution as the "number two person in authority taking the capitalist road".

The "number one" such person, Liu Shaoqi, then head of state, had been allowed to die in the basement of a government office in the central Chinese city of Kaifeng, without proper food and no medicines.

Mr Deng had survived working in a tractor repair shop and looked rather lost and harmless as he moved down a row of foreign ambassadors, number 12 in the Chinese leadership line-up,

wearing a brown Mao suit, white socks and sandals. He would, however, go on to transform China into the superpower it is now.

Mr Deng lived in Half-Moon Alley in a functional



Deng Xiaoping made China a superpower but few believe his successors can fill the vacuum. James Pringle writes

brick house, spacious but seemingly fairly modest, amid the ordinary *Lao Bai Shing* (old 100 names), as the common people of China are called. He was unpretentious. He never went in for a personality cult or smart Western suits and dyed hair like the present ageing leaders, who have not a grey hair among them though most are over 70.

Last week, when I broke the news of Mr Deng's death to a taxi driver taking me to Tiananmen Square, the driver took in the news with the calm by which it was received by most Beijing citizens, who nevertheless acknowledged their debt to Mr Deng.

Tiananmen Square was deserted. However, at the end of Mr Deng's lane three soldiers

in battle dress and armed with AK47 rifles accompanied a policeman who peered into the taxi.

This was visible proof that the Deng era was over. A cartoon in Hong Kong's *South China Morning Post* summed it up: it showed an armchair, with lace antimacassars, an ashtray stuffed with cigarette butts, and an diminutive Chinese leader used with relish, often to emphasise a point, after thunderous hawking; the armchair was empty.

Mr Deng leaves a vacuum. With Mao and Zhou Enlai, Mr Deng had repulsed the Japanese and restored China's place in the world. As Mao himself said in 1949 from the Tiananmen Square

rostrum: "China has stood up." After a brief interregnum of peace in the early 1950s, however, Mao introduced the horrors of the Great Leap Forward in which 30 million people died in a famine, and then the chaos of the Cultural Revolution.

It was Mr Deng who cleared up the mess and who has doubled the income of Chinese people in real terms over the past 18 years, making China rich and powerful, but he also cracked down on student protesters in June 1989 when hundreds were massacred. And it is in his name that Wei Jingsheng and Wang Dan, the human rights activists, are serving long jail terms for what a majority of countries regard as normal political activity.

Mr Deng's successors are lesser men, bland and sleek, who never fought in China's wars, and lack the legitimacy of Mr Deng, who is due to be cremated today without a lying-in-state or a funeral cortege with the masses paying their last respects.

More than 2,000 people have been executed in the past year in a crackdown on crime, though not one has been accused of corruption.

Most people are content just to follow the party line to keep out of trouble, in contrast to a decade ago, or even two years ago, when China was more open. Chinese officials often complain that China does not win Nobel prizes, but it is hardly surprising in a country where creative thinking is anathema to the state. After all, overseas Chinese scientists do well in the Nobel stakes.

"Deng was a ruthless old dictator, but he had vision and transformed China," one diplomat here said. "Suddenly the whole area at the very heart of the Chinese State has gone. There is just a great big hole there. Chinese have to follow the party line, but you hardly hear anyone say they are confident that the insecure men who have succeeded Deng are big enough to fill his shoes."

Hong Kong's Bill of Rights to be diluted

Beijing: China's legislature voted yesterday to water down Hong Kong's civil liberty laws, saying they contradict the constitution Beijing drafted for the territory after it returns to Chinese control.

Beijing has long vowed that it would gut the laws, despite protests from Hong Kong's democrats and Chris Patten, the Governor. The state-run Xinhua News Agency reported that the standing committee of the National People's Congress

voted to strike out 14 laws completely and clauses of ten others. The committee decided that Hong Kong's Bill of Rights, which guarantees freedom of speech and assembly and other civil liberties, would no longer have supremacy over other laws, Xinhua said. The committee said two other ordinances — on public demonstrations and forming associations — would need to be greatly revised.

Beijing claims that the Bill is no longer

needed because its right are guaranteed by the Basic Law, the constitution that will take effect after July 1. Under the Basic Law, police approval will be needed for public protests and local groups will need permission to associate with foreign organisations. Congress said most of the existing laws will remain in effect. Many of the changes were cosmetic, removing references to the Queen or the word "royal", Xinhua said. (AP)

Pyongyang changes leaders

FROM REUTER
IN SEOUL

NORTH Korea may be in the throes of a power struggle, media reports suggested yesterday after Pyongyang signalled a major leadership shake-up.

In an apparent attempt to show that Kim Jong Il, the country's leader, was still in charge, Pyongyang Radio reported his first public appearance since the recent defection of Hwang Jang Yop, one of his closest advisers. Cracks have appeared in the hierarchy of the secretive Communist nation, which has already been destabilised by food shortages, since Mr Hwang's defection to South Korea's embassy in Beijing on February 12.

Kang Song San, the Prime Minister, was replaced last Friday. On Saturday, North Korean media reported that Choe Kwang, the 78-year-old Defence Minister, had died. The line-up of his funeral committee indicated that the three recent departures were just the latest in a series of exits among the ruling elite. The changes have added weight to speculation of a power struggle as Mr Kim prepares to assume the titles of President and general secretary of the ruling Workers' Party, which have been vacant since the death of his father, Kim Il Sung, in 1994.

There was no official explanation for the departure of Mr Kang, although he was known to be ailing. Mr Choe died of a heart attack.

The latest list of 35 names announced by the official media shows that up to a third of the top 30 positions have changed hands in the past two years.

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The Genetic Choices exhibition at the Science Museum in London: insurers insist that testing does not raise the spectre of a genetic underclass

Paying a high price for bad genes

Should insurers have the right to know about our genetic background? Report by Anjana Ahuja

Hanging around the Science Museum in London may not be the most scientific way to conduct a poll, but within half an hour a clear consensus was emerging. The question was simple: should insurance companies have the right to know the results of genetic tests?

The Association of British Insurers ruled last week that people applying for life insurance would have to reveal whether they had taken a test, and, if so, disclose the results. However, the association declared that until 1999, people taking out life policies linked to mortgages worth up to £100,000 would not have to reveal test results. After that date, mandatory genetic testing might be introduced. Visitors to the *Genetic Choices* exhibition at the museum, which opened last month, were unanimous in their disapproval.

"It's not fair," says Barbara Rogers, 40, a special needs care worker from Milton Keynes. "If somebody has 'bad' genes it's not their fault, so how can it be fair to discriminate against them? My partner is a diabetic — these things just happen. I think this development would discourage people from taking tests in the first place."

Annel Harle, 46, a translator from Cardiff, says the decision penalised those who were concerned about their health. "Many people want to take these tests so they can make the right life choices, or protect their children. It is dreadful that some people will be left out because of it."

"I think the insurance industry has to think carefully about what it is doing. After all, having the tests shouldn't necessarily make a difference. There is still the same number of diseases and the same spectrum of risk. People can still drop dead tomorrow. And, anyway, the insurance business is based on risk. By demanding test results, they would be getting higher premiums for less risk."

But last week, at the meeting of the American Association for the Advancement of Science in Seattle, delegates heard the other side of the story. In a paper presented on behalf of the American Academy of Actuaries, David Christianson, the chairman of the academy's Task Force on Genetic Testing, argued that, to continue to exist, the insurance industry needs to operate on a level playing field. It depends on full disclosure to calculate how low it can set its premiums. High-risk individuals, who did not declare the full facts, would have an unfair financial advantage. If these individuals did not pay a premium reflecting their high-risk position, their inclusion would distort payouts, and premiums would have to rise across the board.

This, Mr Christianson predicted, would have a knock-on effect. "The healthiest people start dropping out because their premiums no longer reflect their risk status," he says. This would narrow the pool of risk, and mean that those taking out policies would probably be high-risk individuals, again pushing up premiums. This cycle of spiralling premiums might eventually topple the insurance industry.

That seems rational enough, if slightly dramatic. Mr Christianson went on to set out why, in the academy's opinion,



For life will testing lead to discrimination?

says. "There is great nervousness among certain groups of people who suffer genetic disorders. Some will be prepared to hide medical information from their doctors, so that their insurers don't find out. That is a terrible thing, and it all comes down to money."

Dr Super offers a different solution: raise everybody's premiums to subsidise those who are genetically unfortunate. "It may be idealistic, but if we live in a caring society, we should be prepared to subsidise others. In fact, we do this already with the National Health Service. The NHS would be in clover if we chose not to treat chronic disease, but we still do. We should show the same solidarity in the case of genetic testing."

David Freer, 52, who was taking his 10-year-old daughter Beulah around the exhibition, shared Dr Super's unease, and approved his idea of levying higher insurance premiums to avoid discrimination. But he acknowledged that there was an unfairness in penalising people "whose genes are okay".

The issues are complex and emotive, but there is concern that such a policy is in operation already, since applicants are routinely questioned about their family's medical history and, in some cases, undergo cholesterol and blood pressure tests. The inclusion of genetic test results, say advocates, will simply make the whole procedure more sophisticated.

Dr Maurice Super, a consultant geneticist at the Royal Manchester Children's Hospital, begs to differ. Tomorrow he is opening the world's first Gene Shop, a drop-in centre aimed at educating the public on the issues raised by genetic testing. Dr Super and his colleagues have a "gut feeling of unease" over this issue, because people may shun testing if they think they may suffer financially. "It puts such a negative slant on testing," he says.

The relative who donated a kidney to me had to take an HIV test. The test proved negative, but they didn't tell their insurance company because of the fear of discrimination."

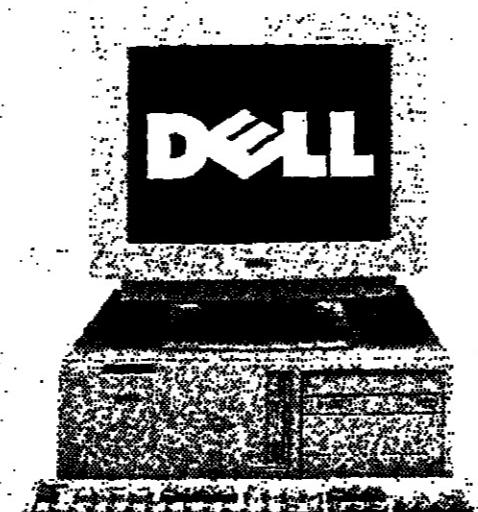
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DNA worries □ Soyuz solution □ Innate tunes

Rogue heart risk

LAST year American scientists caused a flurry by announcing the discovery of a gene that makes its carriers old before their time. Sober observers this side of the Atlantic refused to get too excited, arguing that Werner's syndrome, the condition caused by the gene, is not necessarily a true model of normal ageing, and giving warning that the implications of the discovery had been exaggerated.

Maybe, but a result reported at the Seattle meeting of the American Association for the Advancement of Science does imply that the gene is important in the population at large. A team led by Dr Tetsuro Miki of the Department of Geriatric Medicine at Osaka University has shown that among Japanese, at least, one variant of the gene is strongly linked to the chances of having a heart attack.

Werner's syndrome, first described by German physician Otto Werner in 1904, is a grim condition. Sufferers appear normal until adolescence, when they begin to age very rapidly. They stop growing, their hair turns grey, and they suffer the degenerative diseases of old age. The average lifespan of a Werner's sufferer is 47, and the commonest cause of death is a heart attack.

The gene responsible codes for an enzyme called a helicase, whose job it is to unwind the strands of the double helix of DNA by breaking hydrogen bonds that hold them together. This process happens all the time in cells, in processes such as DNA replication.

and repair. Any failure in these mechanisms would lead to the slow accumulation of errors.

The new research, which has been published in the *American Journal of Medical Genetics*, compares the frequency of variants of the gene in a group of Japanese heart attack victims and a matched control group. The majority of the people examined have the amino acid cysteine at one position in the enzyme, while a minority have an alternative, arginine. This is caused by variants in the gene, and since we have two copies of each gene, this means there are three possibilities. We can have helicase enzymes that contain only arginine or cysteine, or we can have a 50:50 mixture of the two.

Among the Japanese group, the great majority, 85 per cent, had arginine. But the other two genetic possibilities were much commoner among the healthy control group than among heart attack victims. Having either of these combinations appears to reduce your risk of a heart attack by a factor of almost three.

Dr George Martin of the University of Washington, a co-author of the study, says that it urgently needs to be confirmed in a different population. But the results do suggest, he says, that variations in the efficiency of DNA repair could contribute to the risk of heart disease. Says Dr George Roth of the US National Institute on Ageing: "It's fascinating that there is such a link, if it holds up."

SCIENCE BRIEFING

Nigel Hawkes

Russian rocket may rescue Europe

THE Cluster mission, buried in a swamp in French Guiana by the failure of its Ariane 5 launcher last June, may yet rise again by courtesy of a Russian Soyuz rocket. Attempts to rescue the four-satellite mission to the Earth's magnetosphere look doomed for lack of money until the Soyuz idea popped up at a meeting last week of the European Space Agency's science programme committee.

The hope is that using Soyuz rockets would save enough money for ESA to pay for new Cluster instruments, normally the responsibility of the member governments. Several, including Britain, have said they cannot afford any new instruments, which had seemed to rule out a rescue for Cluster. If the figures work out, it will be the first time a Russian rocket has ever been launched from a Western site.

Birds born with a song in their hearts

BIRDS hatch from their eggs with their songs already ringing in their ears, says Dr Peter Marler of the University of California at Davis. Very few learn by imitation: the bulk seem to have their songs "hard-wired" into the structure of their brains.

Of 27 orders of birds, he told the AAAS meeting in Seattle, only three learn by imitation — parrots, hummingbirds, and passerines, which include the sparrow. And even sparrows seem to have a head start. From the beginning they respond to a wide range of short bursts of their own species' song. "They recognise even a small fragment — just a few notes of a song — even when they're only two weeks old," he said.

A similar mechanism may underlie human babies' remarkable ability to learn language, lending support to the view that the language instinct is innate.

Eat fish, tan safely

Anjana Ahuja
on an intriguing way to avoid sunburn

That's because free radicals cause damage to DNA, which can induce cancerous mutations. The commercial spin-offs could be tremendous — the active chemical could be incorporated into a margarine.

The new study will look at damage to DNA and genes, both excellent markers for skin cancer. The 75 volunteers will be split into three groups. One will be fed fish oil capsules. The other two groups will be given other oils which do not contain pufas.

One remarkable effect, Professor Friedman says, was the improvement seen in people who suffer from sun-induced skin rashes. "Some have come out in the daylight for the first time." Initial results are expected next year.

Is there or is there not a male menopause?



MEDICAL OPINION IS DIVIDED. Many doctors believe there is indeed a male menopause and there are thousands of men suffering from loss of libido, aches and pains, impotence, depression, hot flushes and poor performance. If you are over 45 and suffer from any of these symptoms, you need a thorough physical

examination to tell if you might benefit from, for example, testosterone therapy or some other treatment.

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Rent-a-bed Washington

Life in the US capital is in such a state of flux that even the furniture is rented. Bronwen Maddox reports

It's all rented," I find myself saying as people come into the living room. But if they live in Washington DC, there is no need to explain. They know rented furniture when they see it.

Alan Clark would not approve, having damned those who buy their own furniture rather than inheriting it. But in the transient community of the American capital, there is a camaraderie among those of us who rent not just our houses but our chairs, beds and cushions.

"It's quite a sassy, New York sort of thing to do, not a provincial Washington thing," says one British diplomat, who finally graduated to owning his furniture.

He flatters our tribe, though, which is less exclusive than he implies.

On expeditions to dinner parties in the suburbs, I find my eyes sliding past my host's shoulder; I feel instantly at home if I see a grey-and-white striped sofa, the twin of the one in my living room. And I catch myself thinking it lucky I didn't hire the lamp with a transparent base as you can see the gnarled electric cord running through it.

A week before I moved to Washington in September, a World Bank friend confided: "You don't need to spend your first weekend buying a sofa. Ring Cort Furniture Rental." I duly dialled the number of "America's national furniture rental company", and was swept up into America's frontier culture, where no one thinks it strange that you might move to a new country with just a couple of suitcases of clothes.

Washington, a town where the only industry is politics, exerts its pull on many professionals only for a few years. Politicians and their aides may be here for as little as two years, if they are members of the House of Representatives, although senators are guaranteed at least six. Then there are 180 embassies, the World Bank and International Monetary Fund with more than 3,000 staff, as well as 3,000 foreign journalists and hordes of lawyers, lobbyists, and consultants.

That flux lends the town an artificial atmosphere. Like the first

week at university, everyone is playing house, people welcome guests with a self-conscious grin, while fumbling with the unfamiliar locks on their front door.

Anxiety about securing the "right" dwelling runs high; new arrivals fretfully weigh the Chevy Chase neighbourhood against Bethesda, or defensively cite a third baby as the reason for living in unfashionable Virginia. Few resist the fantasy that the New World will bring a new persona. "We've done *bijou* in London; over here, we want to do Dallas," one househunter announced, explaining her craving for plate-glass walls.

For me, though, finding a property was eclipsed by the furniture

problem. I let my London house furnished, as is usual in Britain. But the Georgetown house I took on a short lease was unadorned, with no spare family pieces from London would take months. Renting seemed the obvious solution.

According to the rental brochure, assembling a household of objects to suit your taste is effortless. "We can take the same room and create a look that will appeal to the upscale aspirations of any young couple," it declares. "Or we can shift gear and design a tasteful setting around what many consider the most important piece of furniture in any home: the entertainment centre."

In practice, I floundered as I placed my order over the telephone from London, ticking boxes like a takeaway Chinese food menu. My mother's most elegant friend looked over my shoulder doubtfully, frowning at the illustration of a

kitchen table that fitted, to the point where Cort began initiating the calls: "This is Pamela speaking. I just thought you'd like to know that we'll be getting a new table in stock, mahogany with a kind of European look to it."

Nor is renting cheap: I pay about £200 a month. At first it seemed a bargain, judged by British yardsticks such as Habitat. But furniture costs half as much in the United States, where aggressive shopping for the best price is a religion. My American friends' pursed lips let me know that I have broken the rules of their faith.

To their approval, I am now weaning myself off Cort. The ship carrying my crates from England is about to dock in Baltimore, and no doubt I will make the pilgrimage to the out-of-town malls to buy the rest. But after years of owning and repairing household objects, I will miss the brief freedom of having none: the sense that you can send it all away, get back in the covered wagon, and roll on.

Cort says assembling a household is effortless



Cort, which claims to be America's national furniture rental company, promises a look that will appeal to the most upmarket aspirations

THE TIMES

TOMORROW

FOOTBALL

In the football section

West Ham v Liverpool

FILM

FEATURE

ARTS

CHANGING TIMES

Mailer and an Almighty row

A book on Christ's life is evoking cries of blasphemy, says Jason Cowley

Just when you thought Norman Mailer, the snarled, angry, elder statesman of American letters was settling for mellow retirement, he produces his most outrageous book: a first-person account of the life of Jesus Christ.

Married six times, and a relentless self-publicist, Mailer has always courted controversy, whether as a bar-room brawler (he famously punched Gore Vidal at a party after, he claimed, his fellow writer had called him an "old Jew"), political radical or aspiring wife-assassin (he stabbed his second wife with a penknife).

But this time Mailer's restless quest for novelty seems to have carried him too far. "Only a megalomaniac like Mailer would have the audacity even to attempt to speak in Christ's voice," says Stuart Burrows, a writer and critic at Princeton University. "The only surprise is that Mailer has chosen to write as the Son of God, not the Almighty Himself. It's a bad business."

Although *The Gospel According to Jesus Christ* will not be published until May, it has aroused the hostility of Christian fundamentalists and the evangelical Right, many of whom have denounced it as an insult and blasphemous without having read it. These are but the first skirmishes of what might become a protracted holy war, similar to that which engulfed Martin Scorsese's *The Last Temptation of Christ*, a film that depicted Christ on the Cross fantasising about making love to Mary Magdalene and bringing up a family.

Random House, Mailer's American publisher, is cautious and guarded on the book; its spring catalogue simply says: "As we go to press, Norman Mailer has just given us a short novel that is certain to be one of the most extraordinary and exciting books of his exceptional career." There is a photograph of Mailer but no mention of a title or the subject of the book.

While reluctant to discuss the matter before publication, Mailer issued a pre-emptive statement: "My intent is to be neither pious nor satirical; it is, instead, to make comprehensible for myself what Fulcrum Ousler once called 'The

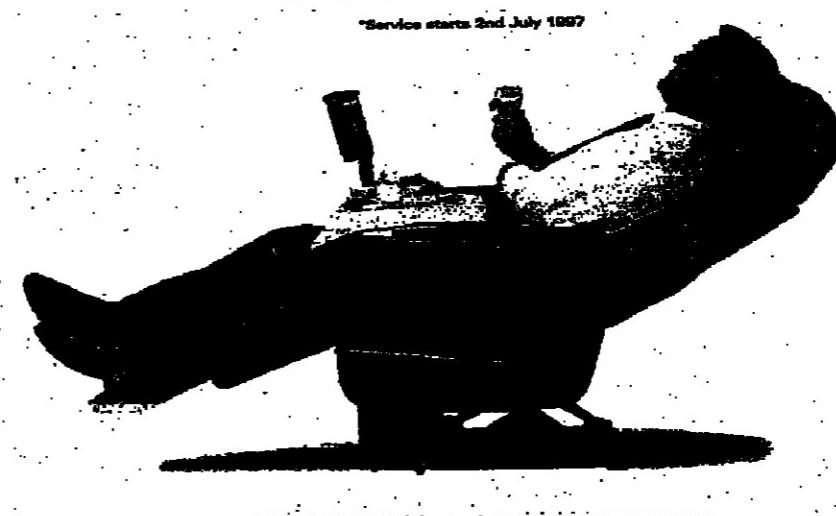
a risk-taker than most of his contemporaries. He's famous for the risks he takes. And this book should be seen as an event in his life."

In a recent interview Mailer described himself as a veteran of "emotional and spiritual wars". At the age of 73, his most bitter battle may have just begun.

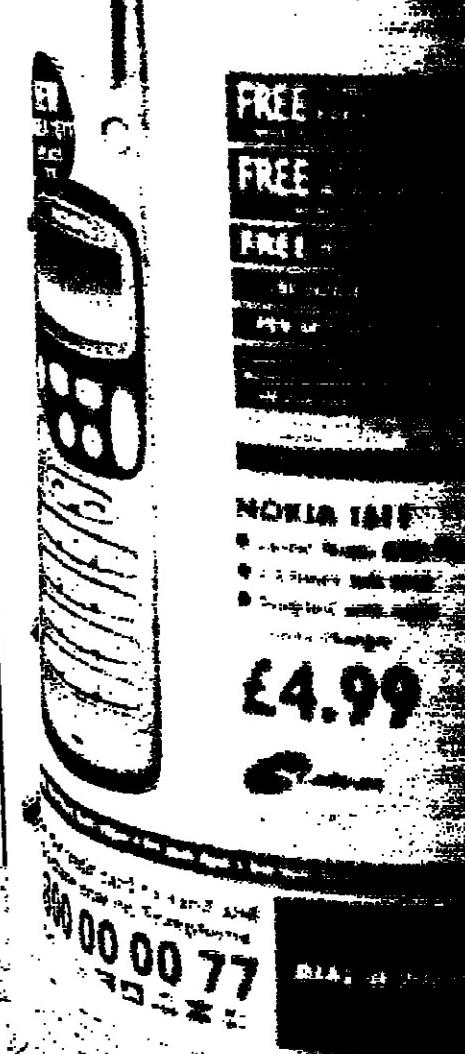
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ARTS THE WEEK AHEAD



■ VISUAL ART
The Barbican revisits the exhibitions of European modern art that fascinated Britain between 1910 and 1914
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REVIEW: Tomorrow



■ OPERA
Catrin Wyn Davies is Gilda in Welsh National Opera's revival of Verdi's *Rigoletto*
OPENS: Tomorrow
REVIEW: Thursday



■ DANCE
Birmingham Royal Ballet celebrates the Sixties with Kenneth MacMillan's *Song of the Earth*
OPENS: Tomorrow
REVIEW: Thursday



■ THEATRE
In Leicester, Kathryn Hunter becomes the first woman to play Lear on the professional British stage
OPENS: Wednesday
REVIEW: Friday

If public libraries did not exist, then who would be bold enough to invent them today? They are one of the few democratic and available civilising influences throughout the land. Everywhere they are free and yet everywhere they are being put in chains.

Bullish proposals from Virginia Bottomley and Iain Spratt seem to me like shamed promises to cover a consistent lack of support for our unique and beleaguered library system. Fig leaves are everywhere in their latest pronouncement, but the nakedness of the Government's library policy cannot be camouflaged.

For instance, there is great insistence that libraries commit to the Internet. This is considered by the Heritage Department — rightly in my opinion — to be of multiple benefit to libraries, not least in bringing in new and younger users and extending the basic information access which is a keystone of our library service. Let there be an Internet, says Mrs Bottomley — and yet the libraries' bid for that very facility has just been turned down by the Millennium Commission, which has surely got something to do with Mrs Bottomley.

It seems almost wilfully cruel to urge the libraries to do something while denying them the means. An amount of £50 million was requested to wire up every library in the United Kingdom to each other and to the Internet. Not as much as was given to the Royal Opera House (good for them); not much more than Sadler's Wells achieved (ditto); and far less than the massive welcome bounty to museums and galleries just announced. Yet libraries extend to every part of the UK. They are and have been the site for students and browsers and readers of all sorts for generations. They need as much encouragement as any opera house or museum, so why has the

jewel in our country's crown, the palace of wisdom for Everyman, been turned into a Cinderella? Could it be that they are not sufficiently fashionable, being so easily available? Fashion exercises a terrible tyranny; it is far grander to dispel largesse to a glittering institution than a library on an estate in Blackburn or Bristol or Brentford. Could it be that I can honestly think of no other reason for this rejection.

Especially when you look at the libraries and lottery funding. If you want to build a new sports hall or new theatre you can get help from the lottery. If you want to build a new library, you can't. Libraries are not eligible. Knowledge is of no importance compared with sport or drama. May we ask why? Some of the new government proposals on libraries can only be interpreted as bluster.

Don't keep our libraries on borrowed time



MELVYN
BRAGG

can buy more books, we are told, because of the ending of the Net Book Agreement. But surely someone must have whispered to the speechwriter that in one county alone the other week book funds were cut by 11 million; that in Northern Ireland all libraries have had their book funding cut by 50 per cent; that T.C. Farries in the Borders — one of the great library suppliers — has called in the receivers.

Free libraries are the cheapest and easiest way to offer knowledge and the pleasures of the imagination to all on equal terms. It is a noble ideal which should not be allowed to gutter out. It is not difficult to refurbish the library system. Then it could be a wonderful engine for the new Britain, which needs to learn to change and to change through learning constantly. Libraries could be in

the vanguard of the brain development essential to our future. Instead, they are left off every agenda. If some of them look shabby, no wonder. They have been shabbily treated.

It could be very different. Last autumn I was in Lincoln for the official opening of a redevelopment of its Central Library. It is added on to the charming Edwardian structure designed by Reginald Blomfield. The result is inspiring, as much a revelation as the archaeological works that accompanied the redevelopment. Stock has gone up from about 50,000 items to about 95,000. From last June (when it opened) to October there was an increase in the borrowing of children's books of 80 per cent and an overall increase of 44 per cent in items lent to the public. Internet access — then what does?

first in Lincolnshire for the general public — has drawn in many new library users.

It is a pleasure to be in the library, to walk around, to pull books from the shelves, and all those I talked to confirmed this. It is a thoroughly modern place which has books as its bedrock but reaches out to future information technologies, as it must. It puts the library back in the centre of the community. It is a bold move by Lincoln County Council, but alas, a rare one — Carlisle is another such which comes to mind. These buck the trend, which is clearly towards inadequate provision and dwindling stock and eroding service due entirely to lack of care, attention and resources.

Lincolnshire is what can be done. It hums with the quiet purposes of the mind. Would that this hum could penetrate the thick walls of the Department of Heritage with a love of libraries. For, if they do not both exemplify and carry out the purposes of heritage, then what does?

Better second time around

My fears that the Jonathan Miller-Giorgio Armani staging of Mozart's comedy might have been a one-off exercise in designer chic were set to naught by Friday's revival. Taken all round it was better than when new two years ago: better conducted, more evenly cast, even more sharply directed by Miller himself, returning to take charge of two separate casts for the run of nearly a dozen performances.

The production is funnier, the humour lasting further into the second act than it did last time, which makes the pitch-black ending all the more shocking. It is also in the best sense, a heartless production, as heartless as the librettist Da Ponte, which is something of a relief in that a heartful, more Mozartian interpretation can be well-nigh unbearable. The full-length mirror set centre-stage into which the singers cannot resist glancing, says something very pertinent about the element of narcissism in most protestations of romantic love.

To some extent productions have to choose between being misogynistic or misanthropic, and Miller properly opts for the latter: his wine bar yuppie heroes return in disguise as

OPERA

Cosi fan tutte
Covent Garden

slack-jawed, shambling parodies of US macho, Kurt Russell and Kevin Costner to a tee. Hilarious though they are, the upmarket rag-trade sisters surely deserve better. All of which raises the problem that won't quite go away: the closer the singers get to the world of Armani, the further they are from Da Ponte's syntax.

There are two dazzling comic performances. Rainer Trost (Ferrando) is not only a near comic (his Kurt Russell parody is spot-on), he is an absolutely brilliant actor *tout court*, catching the character's ambivalence to perfection. His blank-eyed despair after Dorabella's defection was fearful to behold, and he certainly had me fooled into believing he was starting to mature during his seduction of Fiordiligi — but no, in the next scene he was the same heartless git that he was before. And once past a slightly strained *Un aura amara* he sang very beautifully as well, with copious, mellifluous tone.

Alessandro Corbelli's rue-

fully deadpan Alfonso, benign rather than malevolent, eyes wide open with mock-innocence, is another brilliant character study; he too sings smoothly, and naturally relishes the Italian text.

The women are more conventional, sympathetic and affecting. Soile Isokoski (Fiordiligi) is latest in the current line of Nordic sopranos with pearly, even voices and faultless techniques. Both her arias were extremely well sung, and she blended perfectly with the bright mezzo of Helene Schneiderman, the sharp, lively and likeable Dorabella. William Dazeley's forthright Guglielmo — he was recruited from the alternative cast to stand in for an ailing Bo Skovhus — and Lillian Watson's practised, endlessly resourceful Despina completed a well-chosen cast.

The Viennese conductor Dietrich Bärnel drew silky sound from the orchestra and took a generally genial, sunny and singer-friendly view of the score. His overall pacing was cunning: *Cosi* can seem a long opera, but not on Friday. A very engaging evening, then: those who can't get to the theatre should catch this cast live on BBC2 on March 8.

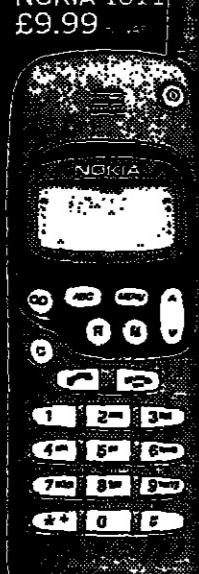
RODNEY MILNES



A sympathetic duo: Soile Isokoski (Fiordiligi) and Helene Schneiderman (Dorabella) in Jonathan Miller's staging

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Enigmas old and new

Philharmonia/Salonen
Queen Elizabeth Hall

"WHO dares wins" is not a motto that always works in the concert hall. But Saturday's instalment in the Philharmonia's Ligeti festival was such a bold and crazy piece of programming that it deserved to succeed.

And it did, in two ways. If you had told me that the way to pack the Queen Elizabeth Hall was by prefacing a piece of Sixties avant-garde music-theatre with an hour of 14th-century vocal music, I would have raised an eyebrow. If you had gone on to claim that the medieval stuff offered weird parallels to the surreal vocal world created by György Ligeti six centuries later, I would have raised the other.

Which only shows what a dismal promoter I would make. The logic of the link proved to be as stunning as the quality of the performances. First, Christopher Page's Gothic Voices toured the vocal scene, c.1350: a repertoire of exquisite but baffling

beauty, in which poetic conceits of love and loss are dressed up in music of astounding mathematical ingenuity. Gothic Voices were suave rather than impassioned; but this very coolness underlined the music's mystique. We can understand the "how" of the virtuosic techniques used by Machaut and others, and relish the sounds, without having a clue about the "why". They are gripping enigmas.

And so are Ligeti's frantic tragicomedies, *Aventures* and *Nouvelles Aventures*, which also take virtuosic vocal techniques on a mysterious tour. Here, however, the techniques are tame (1960s); the three singers (Phyllis Bryn-Jones, Rose Taylor and Omar Ebrahim, all terrific) hiss, screet, belch, giggle, gargle and growl, while a few players (expertly directed by Esa-Pekka Salonen) present a shadowy backdrop that has its own riddles for example, a percussionist dropping a tray of crockery.

Again, the "why" is unclear. But that's the point. This is a shtick on human discourse: the chatter which fills our life, yet gives it no meaning. Just once the singers stop, sensing that somewhere out in the instrumental haze is the meaning they seek. Then they get bored, or frightened, and gabble on. Brilliant stuff.

Rozdestvensky's advantage over

Glagunov, apart from his unimpaired reactions, was that he could hear in the First Symphony the many anticipations of the mature Rachmaninov it is to make a few cuts in the score and get drunk before mounting the podium. Another way — as Gennadi Rozdestvensky did in Manchester a few days short of a hundred years later — is to cut even more of the score and stay sober.

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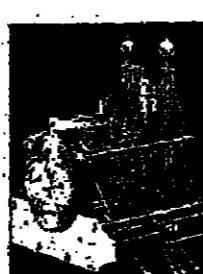
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■ MUSIC

The South Bank presents *Passages*, new songs from the UK's most innovative young composers and poets
CONCERT: Wednesday
REVIEW: Friday



■ BOOKS

A new book, *The Quest for Longitude*, traces the almost mystical journey to make sense of the high seas
IN THE SHOPS: Now
REVIEW: Thursday



■ POP

The Lemonheads, those American pin-ups of alternative pop, kick off their Irish and UK tour in Dublin
GIG: Thursday
REVIEW: Saturday



■ FILM

Nicole Kidman stars in Jane Campion's screen adaptation of the Henry James novel *Portrait of a Lady*
OPENS: Friday
REVIEW: Thursday

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IN SECTION 2

TELEVISION: Do West End plays work in our living rooms? James Christopher on BBC2's new *Performance* season

Performing small miracles

Ten years ago it seemed that every aspiring playwright had sold his or her soul for soap or succumbed to the Channel 4 chequebook, and the death of theatre was widely predicted. Then a young 29-year-old Royal Court director, murtured in the long, thin shadow of Max Stafford-Clark, was hired by Alan Yentob (then Controller of BBC2) to make a case for the middle ground. His name was Simon Curtis, and his mission was to marry the production values of high-class studio drama to first-rate theatre scripts.

His brainchild is BBC2's *Performance* season, an annual series of televised plays which celebrates its seventh year by screening four of the most enterprising West End hits of the past two years. The significance of the series resides in its figures. It corners less than 1 per cent of the BBC's total drama budget of £180 million, but it still draws more than a million viewers. Each show featured would have to run solidly for 13 years on stage before it could equal the audience figures of a single television screening.

The 1997 season kicks off with Sam Mendes' production of Stephen Sondheim and George Furth's musical, *Company*, in subsequent weeks viewers can see Kevin Elyot's dark award-winning comedy, *My Night With Reg*, where old university friends contemplate the consequences of dodgy sexual liaisons with the eponymous Reg; David Thacker's production of Arthur Miller's *Broken Glass*; and Fiona Shaw in (and as) *Richard II*.

This laudable televisual enterprise was conceived by Yentob as an injection of class, and on the whole it works. But it has not been an easy ride for Curtis. There are strong

prejudices, from the very top down, against television introducing on the air and vice versa. Richard Eyre, the outgoing director of the National Theatre, did not help the cause in his keynote address to the Theatrical Management Association in Leeds last November. He said: "Theatre on TV can never be regarded as anything but a wholesale dilution of the theatrical original. [It] is like urging a winemaker to popularise the drinking of burgundy through encouraging people to drink Ribena."

Curtis has always seen his brief as trying to make the studio play as fashionable now as *Play for Today* became in the 1970s. While he has succeeded, he has also been outflanked. Since *Midsummer* BBC drama has undergone something of a revolution.

Once the only safe house for the television single play, *Performance* is now having to elbow its way through an army of expensive costume dramas.

You can't do anything like *Pride and Prejudice* now without the massive house and the horse and cart," Curtis says. "It's one reason why we've gone for a more contemporary edge this year. Rather than competing and creating our own events, we've collaborated with theatre directors to capture their best work."

The rough and tumble of budgets and tactics has taken its toll on this personable operator. The sparkling sense of grey has become something of a waterfall, the chubby élanterance is leaner, some of the youthfulness has turned wary. It is a particularly schizophrenic time for the BBC. The ratings war with the independents has rarely been so hard fought; quality goods keep disappearing off the shelf. And with the predicted explosion of channels there is a threat that programmes such as

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John Sessions and Anthony Calf in Kevin Elyot's dark comedy, *My Night With Reg*, the second play in the 1997 *Performance* season

Performance could be taken out of the mainstream and condemned to fiddly, expensive cable channels.

The point is that while *Performance* doesn't conquer the ratings, there's never been any pressure on us from anyone ever, anywhere, about the figures," Curtis says. "Two hours every Saturday night is a tough order. But there are now so many weekday dramas that we would be completely dead in the water if we ran against them. It's important that the BBC does things that a few of its licence fee payers really value. That's how I perceive *Performance*. It's a unique service."

A unique service with one or two familiar problems. *My Night With Reg* and *Broken Glass* work superbly as studio dramas, shot for the

most part in the rooms for which they were imaginatively intended, but *Company*, taped at the Donmar, is everything Eyre dreams about theatre on television. In the flesh, it is a brilliant musical about that rarest of musical subjects - adult relationships - beautifully unpicked by Adrian Lester and Sheila Gish. On TV, it merely reminds you how artificial theatre is.

It is worth taking shows like this out of the theatre? "Frankly," says Curtis with some frustration, "even if it's just five people in Britain who see *My Night With Reg*, *Company* or *Broken Glass* I'm going to be happy. *Company* is an experiment. It's something we did differently. All I can say is I sat in the Donmar theatre having one of the greatest

experiences of my life. It was a wonderful experiment."

There will always be arguments about what does and doesn't work on television. But in *Performance* the standard of writing generally exceeds anything else on the BBC schedules. The issues are more interesting, there are greater contrasts of tone and taste, and several seriously classy performances.

More importantly, Curtis's hunches about what sits well on TV have already paid enormous dividends. In previous years you could have seen Branagh in his first television role for more than a decade in Sean O'Casey's *The Shadow of a Gunman*, Jane Horrocks as a prostitute and Les Dawson as a 100-year-old granny in

the fabulously funny *La Nona*, Judi Dench in Rodney Ackland's rediscovered masterpiece *Absolute Hell*, and an actress' Who's Who that stretched from Gielgud to Hugh Grant in *The Trials of Oz*.

This year there are magnificent performances from John Sessions and David Bamber in Roger Michell's production of *My Night With Reg*, Fiona Shaw in Deborah Warner's *Richard II*, and Mandy Patinkin, Henry Goodman, Margot Leicester and Curtis's wife, Elizabeth McGovern, in David Thacker's production of *Broken Glass*.

If Curtis continues to provide this level of casts and writers, I could forgive him the odd glass of Ribena. *Company* is on BBC2 Saturday at 8.40pm

IRISH THEATRE

tal, compact drama of mutant morals tells the story of three brothers clinging on to the family home, the refuge of their dying mother, as the world around them turns ever more hostile. Their biggest problem, however, is that violence is not just something that surrounds them, but an activity in which all, to various degrees, take part.

Almost from the outset, talk is of broken bones and appropriate punishments, and all to soon it turns to the finer points of extracting confessions and the video equipment needed to record it.

Mitchell's crisp dialogue and gracefully deployed diversions serve up these strange ways of thinking as blandly rational. Sour Debra (Andrea Irvine) trusts in the sweet Lord who will, if paid off in faith, provide a confidential advice service, even if her husband (Sean Keans) is not quite ready to caught up. Meanwhile, on the outlaw side of the fence, Walter, a terrorist gofer, exquisitely pinned down by Lailor Roddy, and Ray (Stuart Graham as a gentle, family-oriented psychopath) trust only in the brutalising virtue of gunmen.

Mitchell's denouement is inevitably Tarantino-esque, but its violence is less lovingly portrayed. When blood flows in Rathcoole it is in the context of a society which has normalised violence.

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The language of hope

Jonathan Sacks prescribes an old antidote to new despair

On March 13, 1996, Thomas Hamilton walked into the classroom of a Dunblane primary school and shot dead 16 young children and their teacher. It was a shocking tragedy, stark and unrelieved. For days the media could speak of little else, but even hardened commentators found it difficult to know what to say. It was a tragedy that swallowed words and robbed them of meaning.

Nonetheless, during those days of mourning, I could not help but notice another and quite different aspect of the national response. Throughout Britain there could hardly have been an individual who did not share in the mood of grief and loss. I felt it wherever I went. These were children we did not know, families we had never met, yet we were caught up in their tragedy as if they were neighbours and friends.

For a moment I caught sight of Britain as it is, not as we often think it to be. This was not a nation of individuals living disconnected lives in pursuit of self-interest, but a people united by a sense of fellow-feeling and kinship, joined by a covenant, unarticulated but still immensely strong, of shared suffering and fate.

Hobbes, Locke,

Rousseau and others believed that individuals could act together on the basis of a contract which brought into being a state. They discounted the social in favour of the political. This was a great error. For without trust there can be no contracts, and without moral relationships there is no trust.

I believe that collectively we have delegated away too much of what matters in our lives: to governments, police forces, judges, courts, social workers, managers, teachers, therapists and gurus, each of whom, we suspect, can manage our affairs or conflicts or emotions better than we can. This was understandable, but in hindsight it was wrong. When my car breaks down, I take it to a mechanic because he can diagnose the fault and put it right faster and more accurately than I can. But my car is something I own. My life is something I am, and in handing much of it away I am diminished. There has been prolonged public debate about the rights and wrongs of giving away part of British sovereignty to a European parliament. But there has been almost no debate about the unprecedented handing over of sovereignty over large tracts of our lives to other agencies and experts. It has happened exactly as de Tocqueville predicted it would, slowly, tacitly and without resistance. When the system breaks down, we are liable to despair, because our destiny now rests in other hands, not our own. That is when the politics of delegation must turn again to the politics of responsibility, and of moral institutions.

Morality is the antidote to despair because it locates social change at a level at which we, as individuals, can make a difference — in the acts we do and the relationships we create. Its problems are unlike those of politics — the environment, for example, or the economy or a choice of government. A day's work or absence scarcely affects the gross na-



We have delegated too much of what matters most

that lies behind the words "I will fear no evil, for Thou art with me".

It may seem naive to suggest that the recovery of hope through the re-organisation of society can solve problems that have defeated some of the world's most powerful governments. But it did so in the past — in 19th-century Britain and America, and at other moments of social crisis.

I find it moving that the Judeo-Christian tradition, predicated on the sanctity of life, the priority of right over might, and the imperatives of justice and compassion for the vulnerable and disenfranchised, has survived for almost 4,000 years, while the great empires which persecuted its adherents have crumbled and vanished. Societies built on trust have a resilience and adaptability that no political order alone can create. That is why totalitarianism on the one hand and libertarian cultures on the other finally dazzle, but rapidly expend their energies and inevitably suffer death through decadence.

To be a Jew as the 20th century closes is not to speak lightly of hope. But neither is it accidental that the Hebrew word for hope — *hatikah* — gives its name to the national anthem of the reborn Jewish State. The fact that Jews and Judaism survive today is sufficient testimony to the strength of the human spirit, for what Jews can do, so can others.

Jonathan Sacks, 1997

Tomorrow: the common good. The Politics of Hope will be published on March 6 (Capo).

The constitutional proposals of the Labour Party do nothing to make up the democratic deficit

Can we win back our democracy?

I am not sure that Tony Benn would wish to be compared to Edmund Burke, though they both once sat for Bristol seats. In Thursday's Commons debate on the constitution, he was wearing a tie in honour of Tom Paine. There was, though, a passage in his speech of true Burkean eloquence. "People who cannot be disposed of on polling day do not have to listen to anyone. When I go to Chesterfield, every street-sweeper, doctor or home help is my employer, but if a Commissioner goes to Chesterfield or anywhere else, he is above it all... I am the member for Chesterfield and proud of it, but I know that my constituents own the powers that I exercise. I do not own them. I cannot borrow the powers from them and give them away."

These two principles are the basis of representative democracy. The legislator must be accountable, and he is so only if he can be removed. The legislator derives his power from the people, and is not entitled to alienate that power, though it may be delegated on a temporary basis. These principles should be the starting point for the discussion of constitutional issues. They bear on the three main matters of the debate: devolution to Scotland, Wales and possibly to the English regions; the House of Lords; Europe.

The devolution issues must be concerned with potential conflict between different democratic structures: in the case of Scotland the danger is the conflict of jurisdiction between the proposed Scottish parliament and Westminster. The House of Lords and Europe raise different issues: in both cases the problem is that the existing structures are not democratic at all.

In the case of the Lords, the Labour Party takes objection to the hereditary element. The trouble is that the life peers are also undemocratic. We have no constituencies; we do not have to refer to any public opinion: we have not been elected by any popular vote; we are appointed for life; we cannot be removed: we are

answerable to nobody but ourselves. The Labour proposal is to replace the present mixed House of Lords with a House composed solely of appointed persons. This does not answer the democratic objection at all.

The relative impotence of the Lords as a revising chamber follows from its lack of democratic roots. The Lords do not represent the people of Britain. That is what allows the Prime Minister to claim, as he did in opening the Commons debate, that "this House is sovereign".

The Commons is indeed sovereign relative to the House of Lords, except in those matters reserved to the Lords, which include their own procedures, their judicial function and any proposed extension to the life of a Parliament. There the House of Lords is sovereign. Yet John Major should beware of claiming the sovereignty of the House of Commons since so large a part of its power has been handed over to the European Union, much of it by the Treaty of Maastricht which he signed and put through Parliament.

Peter Shore reminded the House how far this power has already gone: "In a written answer on January 23 this year, the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster revealed that 236 statutory instruments enacted European Community Directives in 1992. There were 134 in 1993, 198 in 1994 and 211 last year. These statutory instruments are equivalent to Acts of Parliament — they are not regulations. I maintain that the input of Community legislation into Britain is probably greater than that of domestic legislation." If Britain were to join

the single currency, and accept the ultimate authority of the non-democratic European central bank, Europe would dominate economic policy as well as this detailed legislation.

Like the House of Lords, the EU is an undemocratic body. The European Parliament, which is indeed elected, neither introduces nor carries legislation. The power to propose lies in the Commission, an appointed body which no electorate can remove. The power to decide lies with the Council of Ministers, an inter-gov-

ernment legislation on police and crime, reinforces the need for a revising chamber. As John Major said in the debate, "unicameral government" has been "the object of suspicion to every democrat for centuries". Reform of the Lords has been promised for more than 80 years. Perhaps it will be begun in the next Parliament, but the Labour proposal is so undemocratic as to be useless.

Europe, which is much the most important constitutional issue, could develop in one of four ways. Britain could regain full democratic rights by leaving the European Union and signing a trade treaty similar to that with Norway; the EU could become a looser trading association, perhaps after a failed attempt to create a single currency; Europe could become a single state, but with a democratic constitution, perhaps with an elected president or with government by the European Parliament; or Europe could develop along the present lines to become a single state under a bureaucratic constitution. The first three of these outcomes are compatible with democracy. Unfortunately, the present constitution of the EU is bureaucratic; it is no more democratic than the House of Lords.

In the debate on devolution, John Major tightly pressed Tony Blair for an answer to the so-called West Lothian question, which the Prime Minister put in this form: "How could Scottish members in this House continue to legislate on matters in England, if English members had no control over the same matters

in Scotland?" Early in his speech Tony Blair said: "I can answer it and I will"; towards the end of his speech he said: "Let us turn from the West Lothian question." These were the two pieces of toast inside which the West Lothian question was supposed to be wrapped. But inside the sandwich there was no beef. Tony Blair promised to answer the West Lothian question and later implied that he had answered it, but he never did so: one can only assume that he does not have any answer. That makes Labour's proposals for a Scottish parliament a leap in the dark.

No government in history has survived unless it could take effective decisions. That has been true under authoritarian as well as democratic constitutions. Decision-making powers have already been surrendered by Westminster to the EU under a non-democratic constitution. The Labour Party's proposals would transfer other powers to a Scottish parliament without reducing the right of Scottish members to legislate for England. There must be a danger that the Commons will be seen as being almost as impotent as the Lords, and British democracy will look like a sham, particularly to the English. The Commons has lost too much of its authority already; any further loss could be fatal.

Every secondary school in Britain should distribute copies of last Thursday's *Guardian* so that pupils would understand these constitutional issues. In Tony Benn's words, "This debate will make better reading for the future if we consider the issues against the background, not only of a forthcoming general election, but of a much more serious matter — the crisis of representative democracy, not only in Britain but throughout the Western world. Power is too centralised; it is too secretive. It is increasingly authoritarian, not only in the parliamentary system, but in the political parties. Fundamental reforms are required." That too is a warning worthy of Burke.

Mind the funding gap

We must stop public services going down the tubes, says Peter Riddell

This morning, along with 400,000 fellow Londoners, I shall be travelling on the Northern Line. This is a duty, rather than a pleasure, as we are crammed into old trains, with frequent stops in the middle of tunnels, delays, cancellations and out-of-order lifts and escalators. All is not hopeless. From the autumn, there will be new trains thanks to the Government's Private Finance Initiative. Unfortunately, the service will be no faster, and may be slower since overdue modernisation of track and signals has just been put back three years because of government cuts.

This absurdity is symbolic of the mismatch between the demand for public services and the available finance. That applies as much to the health service and education as it does to London Underground. The Underground is a victim of the Treasury's policy of always cutting capital investment to hold down overall spending. This is easier than cutting welfare provision or other current programmes, regardless of the impact of such sharp shifts on sensible planning. The Private Finance Initiative, under which the private sector finances and manages projects and assumes some of the risk, is supposed to close the gap. But as the Northern Line nonsense shows, this has a limited application, and anyway payment is only deferred to later years. Nor is this situation likely to improve. Gordon Brown has promised to stick to already announced spending plans, in detail for the coming year and in aggregate for the following year.

The investment cuts of more than £700 million over the next three years announced last week by London Underground mean that spending will be too low to prevent the system from deteriorating further. This will add to a £1.2 billion backlog and risk a repetition of the two network-wide power failures of the past year.

This is not a problem for London commuters alone, nor is it a plea for more money from taxpayers generally. It is, as the chairman of British Airways, Sir Colin Marshall, argued last week, a critical national issue, important for London's position as a financial and tourist centre, as well as for reducing pollution and congestion on the roads. This has produced growing tensions between government and business. Michael Cassidy, who has just stepped down after five years as chairman of the Corporation of London's key policy and resources committee, has criticised the Government's record and reluctance to try



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This is not a problem for London commuters alone, nor is it a plea for more money from taxpayers generally. It is, as the chairman of British Airways, Sir Colin Marshall, argued last week, a critical national issue, important for London's position as a financial and tourist centre, as well as for reducing pollution and congestion on the roads. This has produced growing tensions between government and business. Michael Cassidy, who has just stepped down after five years as chairman of the Corporation of London's key policy and resources committee, has criticised the Government's record and reluctance to try

capital. There would also be scope for improving efficiency, though London Underground is much better managed than ten or 15 years ago. The problem is whether the returns would be attractive enough, given the need to maintain services and the vast backlog of investment.

Some subsidy would be necessary to ensure the desired investment, as everywhere else in the world. In the absence of more money from taxpayers, there is a case for a levy on industry and commerce in London, to be paid on top of business rates, with small firms exempt. This has been suggested by the Corporation of London and backed by leading Tory supporters such as Lord Sheppard of Didsbury, former chairman of Grand Metropolitan. Under a strategic authority for London, a scheme devised by Tony Travers and Stephen Glaister of the London

Times, it was clearly a tax.

Labour leaders have been wary both of endorsing the levy, for fear of being accused by the Tories of supporting a new tax, and of backing privatisation, for fear of alienating their allies. Andrew Smith, Labour's transport spokesman, has talked of attracting private investment "into the system without losing strategic control through privatisation". This could be done by station modernisation, smartcard ticketing, designing, renewing and operating schemes for private sector refurbishment and maintenance of track and tunnels, and procurement and financing of trains. This may not amount to selling off the whole system but it is privatisation in practice. Increased private investment and earmarked levies may be the only way out of the tax and spend impasse.

This debate has not only united a wide range of diverse bodies in criticism of the Government, but has also helped to create a distinctive London voice. Ever since the abolition of the Greater London Council in the mid 1980s, the Tories have resisted a strategic authority for London. A Labour government would create one, and if Tony Blair had his way, a mayor for London as well. Someone needs to speak up for me to try and find a little space to read *The Times* on the Northern Line.

Ever Hopeful

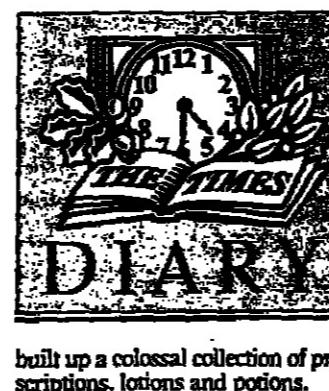
EVERY few weeks a fax arrives at Buckingham Palace from the Regal Baltimore Hotel in Los Angeles. It is from the concierge there, Greg Donovan, and exhorts the Queen to bestow a knighthood on Bob Hope. Donovan recalls the beginning of the "knight Bob" campaign. He was reading the newspapers out to Hope and saw that Norman Schwarzkopf had received an honorary "K". I looked across at Mr Hope's big grand piano and there on prominent display was a portrait of

Her Majesty, Queen of England." When he suggested to Hope that he too should be knighted, the comedian "sort of fell silent and said quietly: 'Yes, you know that would be nice.'"

In the past two years, Donovan has written repeatedly to the Queen, the Duke of Edinburgh, the Prince of Wales, the Duke of York, Prince Edward, the Prime Minister, even Princess Margaret, emphasising his hero's work entertaining British troops in the Second World War.

There is a precedent: another British comic genius who made his home in America, P.G. Wodehouse was finally knighted aged 93, but died six weeks later on Long Island. Of his campaign for Hope, Donovan says: "I just want to thank him for the memories."

Viennese whirl
AS IF to prove that little changes in the fields of royalty and desperate vanity, the contents of the Austrian Empress Elisabeth's bathroom cabinet are being sold off to Vienna. Elisabeth, rated the Catherine Deeneue of the mid 19th century,



built up a colossal collection of prescriptions, lotions and potions. In the days before the Chelsea Harbour Club, she adhered to a strict gymnastic programme, shaved herself to stay slim, refused to have her streaks of hair cut despite the searing headaches they caused her, and by way of a Cosmo substitute, collected pictures of other beautiful women from history.

Last waltz?

SHADES of Michael Portillo's disastrous rally for his tenth anniversary in Parliament stalk Matthew Taylor, the eager-beaver Liberal Democrat MP for Truro. Taylor,

who speaks with exclamation marks, has sent out a letter asking fans to come and celebrate his own tenth anniversary at a dinner-dance at the Headland Hotel in Newquay, where they can listen to Paddy Ashdown and dance to the Soul Survivors — an improvement on last year "as it is a special occasion".

There may after all be no 20th anniversary. Defending a slim-minority in the imminent election, Taylor shows a blithely confident spirit, writing: "At the moment, the constituency election fund is £90 in debt!"

So simple



P.H.

has promised a course of A-level maths classes.

Max factor

THERE is a severe lesson for schoolmasters in David Twiss's foreword to his tremendous new collection of Canadian obituaries: be good to your pupils — one of them might end up running a newspaper. The Twiss, as he is widely known, recalls how his former Editor at *The Daily Telegraph*, Max Hastings, on deciding to add a comment to the obituary of his housemaster Charterhouse, R.L. Arrowsmith.

Hastings was no fan of Arrowsmith or Charterhouse. He once said there were not enough heroes in the day to be rude about place. So when Arrowsmith's widow wrote to complain about his marks, Hastings was not for it. "A lively correspondence ensued," writes the Twiss, which the Editor gave the grumpy woman an extensive recitation of her husband's shortcomings.

P.H.



COST OF BENEFIT ANALYSIS

Which party will make welfare work?

The Labour Party used to think that the only way to solve poverty was to take money from the rich and give it to the poor in the form of higher benefits. As today's *Times* guide to election issues on page 6 explains, the party has undergone a conversion. Now the emphasis by both parties is on helping people off welfare and into work. Fifty years of the postwar social security system have shown it to be the worst kind of safety net — the kind from which it is very hard to climb. The challenge is to turn it into a trampoline.

Hence the talk from both Labour and the Tories of "workfare", in which benefit is given to the unemployed only if they are prepared to do work or training in return. New Labour has made much of the responsibilities that should accompany welfare rights; if opportunities are offered by the State, the individual ought to take them. Workfare will almost certainly form part of the Tory manifesto too. Today the Employment Minister, Eric Forth, will announce the extension of two pilot schemes to 28 areas, covering 100,000 long-term unemployed. In return for £10 a week on top of their benefit, they will have to spend 13 weeks job-seeking or training and a further 13 weeks working for the community if they are not to lose benefit altogether.

Labour would offer 250,000 young unemployed four different options. Those who refused would have their benefit cut by 40 per cent. Employers would be paid a £75 a week subsidy for each long-term unemployed person they took on. It proposes to spend the £5bn proceeds of its windfall tax on the utilities on these programmes.

The idea that people should offer something in return for their benefits has obvious attractions and serves two further purposes. Workfare instantly identifies and shakes out the system those who have been abusing it — by claiming benefit but doing casual or

black-market work on the side. And those who are unused to the discipline of time-keeping and following instructions have the chance to learn or relearn the psychology of work, making themselves more employable.

But workfare is expensive. The cheapest way to deal with unemployment is to pay a £100 cheque each week. "Active" labour-market measures, which help people to look for work, train them and place them, cost far more. In the long run, there may be a return in terms of a lower social security bill, as long as the newly employed do not simply displace others from work. But in the short run, such schemes cannot be self-financing. The Tory proposals are expected to pay for themselves. Any promise in the manifesto to extend them nationwide as long as they are self-financing should therefore be taken with some scepticism.

But is Labour really in earnest in its promise to reform welfare? Would it not fall foul of old Labour ideology and the strength of the "poverty lobby"? Tony Blair would certainly have to show determination in the face of much of his parliamentary party. But he would find that the poverty pressure groups have undergone their own transformation in the past few years, and are more inclined than ever to support modern welfare-to-work measures. And a left-of-centre government would be more likely to win popular support for such reforms. There is some merit in Mr Blair's argument that only the party that founded the modern welfare state would be trusted to reform it.

Any difficulties that Mr Blair experienced with his parliamentary party would surely be offset by support from Tory benches. It would be extraordinary for a Conservative opposition to vote against legislation to toughen up welfare. Such reforms are likely to be enacted whichever party wins — the time is ripe for them.

From Lord Ackner

Sir, Baroness Blatch, Minister of State at the Home Office, in her letter of February 19, clearly implies that the judges are failing to impose adequate sentences. May I remind her of the following important facts.

1. In 1991 the judges were accused by the Government of being too tough on crime. Accordingly, amongst other statutory measures to curb their sentencing powers, Section 29 (1) of the Criminal Justice Act 1991 provided:

An offence shall not be regarded as more serious for the purposes of any provision of this Part by reason of any previous convictions of the offender or any failure of his to respond to previous sentences.

2. The same figure which Baroness Blatch quotes, purporting to demonstrate that the judges are now too soft on crime by failing adequately to increase their sentences by reason of previous convictions, cover a period from 1993-94 before the Government were obliged in the Criminal Justice Act 1993 to repeal Section 29 and restore to the judges their discretion to take into account previous convictions.

3. The Home Office does not normally collect information about the previous convictions of burglars. The statistics in Lady Blatch's letter have been constructed from a sampling exercise conducted in five different weeks in 1993 and 1994. These samples covered only 949 burglars out of a total of 78,300 sentenced in those two years.

4. Average figures are notoriously misleading. In 1994 the range of first custodial sentences for burglary was from two months to seven years. For a second conviction from two months to ten years. For the third or more of such sentences it was between six months and ten years.

5. Since the repeal of Section 29 the prison population has gone up by approximately 50 per cent, from approximately 40,000 to 60,000, and currently there is considerable anxiety at the extent of prison overcrowding.

Yours faithfully,
ACKNER,
House of Lords,
February 20.

From the Director of Justice

Sir, Baroness Blatch rightly says that it is "essential that the public have confidence in our criminal justice system". The Government's stated aims — honesty and transparency in sentencing — are also laudable. But the proposed mandatory sentencing regime will achieve none of these aims.

Mandatory sentences ignore the reality that crimes — even by repeat offenders — are committed in a wide variety of circumstances. Judicial discretion ensures that the principle of proportionality is maintained as judges see the offenders, the circumstances of the crime, and the effect on the victims and their families, all at first hand.

Excellent research carried out by the Prison Reform Trust shows that mandatory sentences have resulted in more contested trials — exposing victims to the trauma of having to give evidence — and that there has been a shift from judicial to prosecutorial discretion as prosecutors and defence lawyers circumvent mandatory sentences by negotiating guilty pleas to lesser charges.

The result is *dishonesty* in sentencing, which is bound to lose public confidence. The House of Lords' amendments to restore judicial discretion strike a blow for common sense. It is to be hoped that they are accepted by the Government when the Bill returns to the Commons; otherwise we may

see a future government hurriedly introducing reforms shortly after its enactment — exactly what happened with the previous attempt to fetter judicial discretion in sentencing, by unit fines, in the 1991 Criminal Justice Act. This is no way to legislate for the protection of the public.

Yours,
ANNE OWERS,
Director,
Justice,
93 Carter Lane, EC4,
February 19.

From Sir Frederick Lawton

Sir, If the Crime (Sentencing) Bill ever becomes law in substantially its present form the judges will have to construe the resulting Act according to its text, not Baroness Blatch's version of it as set out in her letter. They will find in it a reference to "burglary"; but *name to what she calls "house burglars"* nor "to breaking into other people's homes". Her language reflects that of the Larceny Act 1901 which was repealed in 1968.

Under the Theft Act 1968, which replaced this legislation, the social inadequacy, living in a tenement let out in single rooms, commits burglary if he enters the unlocked room of another resident, breaks open the gas meter in it and steals the contents. So does the passer-by who enters an empty building to steal firewood or fittings.

Would a judge, under the proposed Bill, be entitled to find that there were exceptional circumstances in such cases? They are common enough.

Yours truly,
FREDERICK LAWTON,
1 The Village,
Skelton, York,
February 20.

Bishop's reply on Lenten reading

From the Bishop of Jarrow

Sir, May I respond to the letters which you published on February 20, commenting on my decision to read the Koran during Lent.

Each day in Lent the morning prayer, as found in the increasingly popular *Celebrating Common Prayer*, begins with the words "Blessed are you, God of compassion and mercy" — a healing phrase which punctuates the Bible and heads each chapter of the Koran.

The sadness of our world is that this fundamental truth gets lost in the midst of human conflict, sectarian struggles in Ireland, aggressive intolerance in Sudan, destructive violence in Pakistan and vendettas and fatwas in the Middle East are featured in your columns daily.

But none of these events, tragic as they are in themselves and in their consequences, compromises the central truth of a religion, as stated in your leading article of February 13, "The truth about the *farwa*", and as the letter you published on February 22 from the Imam of the London Mosque confirms.

Far from it being inappropriate to Lent to read the Koran when things like this are happening, these very events themselves (and the many similar ones in the history of other religions, including Christianity) make it all the more essential to go back to sources and sift the truth from its distorted expressions.

Then we may find in one another traces of that compassion and mercy which are God's essence and his gift to all.

Yours faithfully,
ALAN JARROW,
The Old Vicarage,
Hallgarth, Pitton, Durham.
February 22.

From Mr Qamar Nadeem Ahmed

Sir, The Pastor of Norwich Reformed Church acknowledges that the "study of other faiths is useful in discouraging prejudice" (letter, February 20), but goes on to lament Islam's "barbaric penalties" for criminals and the Muslim persecution of Sudanese Christians, concluding that such a religion has "little or nothing to teach those who value the Bible".

In the Muslim community similar voices can be heard decrying Christianity for all the sins of modernity, including the abuse of drugs, homosexuality, the Aids virus, *ad infinitum*.

The sooner we follow the example of the Bishop of Jarrow in showing greater tolerance for the scriptural premises of religion as opposed to human impetuosity, the sooner we shall be able to rise above the *din* and clatter of prejudice and chauvinism.

As a Muslim, I see in the Bishop of Jarrow's gesture only a benign attempt to strengthen not only the bonds of affinity between Muslims and Christians but to give greater credence and vigour to the Church.

Yours sincerely,
Q. N. AHMED,
4 Baldry Gardens, SW16.
February 20.

From Canon H. W. J. Harland

Sir, Give up the Bible for Lent? My Lenten discipline is to give up bishops.

Yours faithfully,
H. W. J. HARLAND,
St John's Vicarage,
4 Cornwallis Avenue,
Folkestone, Kent.

Science and the arts

From the Director of the Royal Institution of Great Britain

Sir, Your correspondent Mr K. R. Williams (February 20; see also letters, February 15) will be pleased to know that, in the 170 years since Faraday started the Friday evening discourses at the Royal Institution as a way of bringing current science to a general audience, the 300 or so members and guests who continue to attend each week contain many who are not themselves scientists.

Lawyers, civil servants, industrialists, school teachers and a variety of other professionals gain enlightenment and, dare one say, entertainment, though sadly these days we are a bit light on politicians.

Furthermore, for the last two or three years it has been possible to see some of the discourses on BBC TV, albeit in the *Learning Zone* broadcast at dead of night.

Bridges between humanities and sciences remain as important, and elusive, as ever but the Royal Institution is still a forum for all.

Yours faithfully,
PETER DAY,
Director,
The Royal Institution of
Great Britain,
21 Albemarle Street, WI.
February 20.

Seasonal variations

From Mr Patrick Dudgeon

Sir, It is perfectly correct for British Airways to serve alcohol during Lent (letter, February 17), as all the passengers could take advantage of "travelers' dispensation".

Yours faithfully,
PATRICK DUDGEON,
The White House,
Ellington Street, Dover, Kent.
February 18.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

1 Pennington Street, London E1 9XN Telephone 0171-782 5000

Judges and Home Office in conflict over sentencing

From Mr A. W. N. Probert

Sir, Libby Purves, in her article on the price of privatising Oxford (February 18) makes an apt point on the unique value placed on thought and scholarship at Oxford and Cambridge. Many who have experienced both Oxbridge and younger institutions cannot fault the teaching and research of the latter, but they do not rival the ancient foundations for encouraging new ideas and sheer scholastic vigour.

Quality would, in my view, be ensured by the provision of a comprehensive grant linked to a "graduate tax", which would cover both tuition and living costs and later be levied according to income after graduation. This was proposed by Nicholas O'Shaughnessy and Nigel Allington in their book, *Light, Liberty and Learning* (1992), and is infinitely preferable to the bastardised version of the student loan scheme now being proposed (reports, February 17).

Such a "tax" would allow for proper funding of universities, much reduced cost to the Exchequer and fair and equitable finances for the students, who would receive money when they need it and repay when (and if) they can afford it. And it's an original idea — honed at Oxbridge.

Yours faithfully,
ANDREW PROBERT,
University of Cambridge,
The Judge Institute of
Management Studies,
Trumpington Street, Cambridge.
February 19.

proximately 50 per cent, from approximately 40,000 to 60,000, and currently there is considerable anxiety at the extent of prison overcrowding.

Yours faithfully,
ACKNER,
House of Lords,
February 20.

From the Director of Justice

Sir, Baroness Blatch rightly says that it is "essential that the public have confidence in our criminal justice system". The Government's stated aims — honesty and transparency in sentencing — are also laudable. But the proposed mandatory sentencing regime will achieve none of these aims.

Mandatory sentences ignore the reality that crimes — even by repeat offenders — are committed in a wide variety of circumstances. Judicial discretion ensures that the principle of proportionality is maintained as judges see the offenders, the circumstances of the crime, and the effect on the victims and their families, all at first hand.

Excellent research carried out by the Prison Reform Trust shows that mandatory sentences have resulted in more contested trials — exposing victims to the trauma of having to give evidence — and that there has been a shift from judicial to prosecutorial discretion as prosecutors and defence lawyers circumvent mandatory sentences by negotiating guilty pleas to lesser charges.

The result is *dishonesty* in sentencing, which is bound to lose public confidence. The House of Lords' amendments to restore judicial discretion strike a blow for common sense. It is to be hoped that they are accepted by the Government when the Bill returns to the Commons; otherwise we may

that he was never interested in profiting financially from his story. He did not receive a penny for it, nor did he ask for any money.

Even the Israeli courts recognised the moral motives behind his actions, which should have mitigated his sentence. Instead, he has had to endure solitary confinement on the spurious basis that he could reveal further secrets to his country's enemies. The Israeli Government knows full well that Mr Vanunu, a lowly nuclear technician, told all he knew. The experts who debriefed him for *The Sunday Times* will confirm that.

Mr Vanunu was convicted of treason and espionage — perhaps the only example in the democratic world of the leaking of information to a newspaper being treated as an act of treachery. Israeli officials have consistently claimed that he "purposefully assisted" countries that were in a state of war with Israel. But there is not a shred of evidence to show that he ever approached or tried to supply any foreign power or enemy of Israel with information in his possession.

Instead, he came to *The Sunday Times* with his testimony and photographs, so that the world would know that Israel had secretly become the world's sixth-largest nuclear weapons state, while its leaders were denying that Israel had a nuclear capability and even claiming that it would never be the first to introduce nuclear weapons into the Middle East.

Imagine how we would feel if a British government had made us a nuclear power by subterfuge, without democratic accountability or even putting the issue to the vote. We would surely regard any whistleblower in such circumstances as a hero of open government rather than a traitor. Yet the Israeli authorities have sought to besmirch Mr Vanunu's motives at every opportunity, alleging that he tried to hawk his story around for large sums of money.

As Editor when he came to *The Sunday Times* in 1986, I can testify

Given the motives which led Mr Vanunu to tell the world about Israel's nuclear arsenal, the illegal manner of his arrest, the fact that he has not jeopardised Israel's security one whit and the punishment he has suffered, it is time for Israel to exercise long-overdue clemency and release him. At the very least, surely his solitary confinement should end.

I urge all who meet President Ezer Weizman during his current welcome visit to press these points on him.

Yours sincerely,
ANDREW F. NEIL
(Editor-in-Chief),
Scotsman Publications,
20 North Bridge, Edinburgh.
February 20.

From Mrs Robert Willis

Sir, Why should anyone apologise for describing Mr Rifkind as a Jew (letter, February 22)? Not only are Jews respected members of our own society: Germany was a more highly regarded and acceptable member of the European community when its Jewish citizens were able to contribute so much to its and the world's culture.

Yet the *Frankfurter Allgemeine*'s gaffe for the epithet is irrelevant to a political debate, is a timely reminder that Germany's nationalistic intolerance still lies just below the democratic language with which Chancellor Kohl clothes his drive to build a Fourth Reich.

It reveals how little some Germans understand genuine Europeanism, when a respected newspaper is apparently surprised that a Jew should quote a German Protestant who translated the Jewish scriptures into German to curb Roman pretensions.

Yours faithfully,
LEWIS STRETCH,
3 Laro Close,
Godmanchester, Cambridgeshire.
February 22.

Letters for publication should carry contact telephone numbers. We regret that we cannot accept letters by telephone but they may be sent by fax to 0171-782 5046.

Such assurances, with moral if not legal force, were given by the officers of Mrs Ann Hale's village church in Warwickshire in 1876, the time of its re-opening (letter, February 8). The records of the society are now open to public access at Lambeth Palace Library.

Yours etc.,
COLIN S. GALE
(Assistant Archivist),
Lambeth Palace Library,
London SE1 7JU.

ed no objection. But, according to the then rector, neither did they attend the church or demand a shifting towards its restoration, as many of them (including the local landowner) were Methodists and had their own church improvement scheme to fund.

In an increasingly competitive market, churches wishing to increase their custom would do well to foster caring communities of genuine faith, perhaps sharing a pot of tea after morning service but leaving the popcorn in the cinema, along with the paying stalls that were forsaken long ago.

Yours faithfully,
ELIZABETH WILLIS
Bunbury, Lower Shipton,
Henley-on-Thames, Oxfordshire.
February

OBITUARIES



Frank Launder, screenwriter and film director, died in Monaco yesterday aged 89. He was born in 1907.

PRETENDING to no higher purpose than to entertain, Frank Launder wrote, directed and produced some of the most popular films in the heyday of British cinema. During the Second World War he and his long-term associate Sidney Gilliat were responsible for such hits as *Millions Like Us* (1943), *Waterloo Road* (1944) and *The Rake's Progress* (1945). But it was for their quintessentially English, schoolgirl farce, *The Belles of St Trinian's* (1954), that they will be best remembered.

The story of a raucous and bankrupt school for girls in which more time is spent bickering than sitting on the school bench, the film was an enormous commercial success. In the words of one critic it was "not so much a film as an entertainment on celluloid, a huge charade, a rich pile of idiocy and splendidly senseless images". Launder and Gilliat followed it up with four sequels including *Blue Murder at St Trinian's* (1957) and *The Pure Hell of St Trinian's* (1960).

Frank Launder was born in Hitchin, Hertfordshire, and educated in Brighton. While working in the Civil Service he joined the Brighton Repertory Company and it was when the company presented one of his own comedies, *There Was No Signpost*, that his movie career began. A film producer spotted him and offered him a trial as a scriptwriter. With the demise of silent movies, dialogue was becoming important in the film industry for the first time.

Launder entered the cinema in the scenario department of British International Pictures at Elstree, where he

FRANK LAUNDER



From Launder's film *The Pure Hell of St Trinian's*, 1960

started by designing titles and then turned to scriptwriting. Films were made in the hectic studio "factory" system of those days, and Launder often found that his scripts were being torn, quite literally, page by page from his typewriter for immediate use.

Among his assignments were literary adaptations, such as Shaw's *How He Lied to His Husband and Hardy's Under the Greenwood Tree*. In the latter Launder found himself being asked to kiss his hand in front of the microphone because the primitive equipment of the time could not pick up the sound of members of the cast, kissing in front of the camera. At this time Launder also wrote material for the comedians Leslie Fuller and Ernie Loring, and devised the story of *Oh Mr Porter*, a delightful comedy starring Will Hay.

Launder's first collaboration with Sidney Gilliat was in 1936 when they were jointly responsible for the script of a thriller, *Seven Sinners*, and it was in that genre that they first made their mark. Two years later their script for *The Lady Vanishes* was filmed by Alfred Hitchcock. It introduced the intrepid Englishmen, Charles and Caudron (played by Basil Radford and Naunton Wayne), who so caught the public fancy that they went on to appear in other films and even had their own radio series.

Night Train to Munich, directed by Carol Reed, was another successful thriller from a Launder-Gilliat script, and they worked with Reed again on *Young Mr Pitt*. In 1943 they turned to directing and made a distinguished debut with *Millions Like Us*, a warm and sympathetic study of women factory workers in wartime.

After that they took turns to direct but they continued to collaborate on scripts and to act as co-producers. Their individual contributions are difficult to separate. From 1944 they had their own production company, Individual Pictures. Their trademark became a pair of empty folding director's chairs, with the names Launder and Gilliat on the backs. But, one not wanting to take precedence over the other, they regularly swapped the chairs around so that neither name always appeared first.

Among the films directed by Launder in the postwar period were *I See a Dark Stranger*, a comedy thriller, and *Captain Boycott*, an historical drama, both with Irish backgrounds; and *The Blue Lagoon*, from the novel by H. de Vere Stacpoole. But by far his most successful picture at this time was *The Happiest Days of Your Life*, set in a girls' school and drawing rich comedy performances from Alastair Sim (a favourite Launder-Gilliat actor), Margaret Rutherford and Joyce Grenfell.

In 1954 Launder turned to comedy in a broader idiom with *The Belles of St Trinian's*, which was inspired by Ronald Searle's drawings of dreadful schoolgirls. It contained another tour de force by Alastair Sim, who played both the headmistress and her not-so-good brother. The enormous popularity of the film led to four sequels.

Launder's favourite film was *Gloria* (1955), a whimsical piece about a weakly Scotish boy who becomes an Olympic athlete. His later work as a director included *The Bridal Path* and *Joey Boy*, an army comedy. During the 1960s Launder and Gilliat were active in the management of British Lion, the independent production and distribution company, and this left them less time for their own projects.

After *Endless Night* (1972), a suspense story based on the novel by Agatha Christie, Gilliat virtually retired, but Launder went on to complete the fifth instalment of the St Trinian's saga, *The Wildcats of St Trinian's* in 1980. This was to be his last film. He retired to live at Cap d'Ail in the South of France.

Sidney Gilliat died in 1994. Launder is survived by his second wife Bernadette O'Farrell, who had appeared in several of his films, and by two children from his first marriage and two children from his second.

MARGARET BRANCH

Margaret Branch, founder of the National Association for Gifted Children, died on January 30 aged 84. She was born on April 18, 1912.

AS a social worker, Margaret Branch recognised the pressing need for society to do something for gifted children who through boredom and frustration, could so easily become disturbed and misunderstood. It was largely due to her vision, energy and persuasiveness that the National Association for Gifted Children (NAGC) was founded in 1966. From then on it was moulded by her powerful, if idiosyncratic personality. Her strong principles and ideas, though others may not always have agreed with them, were nonetheless treated with respect.

Branch did not believe that gifted children should go to special schools but that teachers and parents should be trained to recognise and deal with them. What a gifted child needed, she argued, was a richer, deeper curriculum, rather than a quicker journey through a normal one. She was always adamant that the identities of gifted children should be protected and that no family should be excluded from membership of the organisation because of financial inability.

The NAGC now has a steady membership of around 2,000 families and 200 schools. Its opinion and expertise is widely recognised and sought. In its branches all over Britain, gifted children can mix with others like them in "an atmosphere where specialness is ordinariness and where they do not have to act others' ideas of ordinariness but can be themselves".

Margaret Johnston, as she was before her marriage to Donald Branch, was born in London but taken to Vancouver by her parents when she was only a few weeks old. The family only returned to London 12 years later.

She trained and worked as a social worker in Liverpool before, in 1938, going to Prague to teach English. But with the invasion of the Czech Republic the next year she returned to London where, on the outbreak of the Second World War, she joined the WAAFs. Subsequently she became involved in the French Resistance, and, captured by the Nazis, she was tortured and interned in a concentration camp.

After the war she worked with the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration (UNRRA) in Poland before winning a scholarship in 1947 to study mental health at the LSE. Graduating, she worked as a psychiatric social worker.

Branch was particularly fascinated by the work of Karl Jung. When he invited her to Zurich, she accepted the offer with alacrity, and spent ten months working under his supervision. "He was wonderfully irascible," she later wrote, "and the basis of all I know. Most of what I know is with him."

Returning to Britain, she continued to work as a psychiatric social worker, first at Bedeley Hospital, 1949-53, and then at Mauds Vale Hospital, before taking on a senior psychiatric social worker's post in the York Clinic of Guy's Hospital where she remained until her retirement.

It was when she was at Guy's that, in 1965, she attended the conference which led to her launching the NAGC, combining her training in psychology with the educational expertise of her colleague, the former headmistress Camilla Ruegg.



Branch and Ruegg, who shared a home throughout their lives (Branch separated from her husband), worked doggedly. Within nine months the first NAGC camp was held at Telet's Park in Camberley.

Branch worked late into the night preparing for each new day, and yet would still have the energy and enthusiasm to be up long before dawn, to lead groups of children on badge-watching forays. Her 1966 book *Gifted Children* focused professional attention on the association.

Soon the NAGC had grown into an organisation of national status, recognised as holding authoritative views. Branch was a determined publicist, never letting slip any chance to appear on television or radio. Though diminutive in stature, her at times shrewish temper and her dogged determination made her a force to be reckoned with.

On retiring from the NHS in 1973 she continued to practise privately as a psychotherapist and was particularly interested in the counselling of transsexuals. She also worked for a while as the full-time general secretary of the NAGC. It was with great reluctance that she eventually let go of the reins.

Margaret Branch's husband, from whom she had been separated for many years, predeceased her in 1970.

THE REVEREND MICHAEL HOLLINGS



Hollings at a service during the Notting Hill Carnival

The Reverend Michael Hollings, MBE, MC, Roman Catholic priest and author, died on February 21 aged 75. He was born on December 30, 1921.

he would not call the police if the man would return for a talk with him the next day. The intruder eventually became one of Hollings's most loyal parishioners.

It was through an intense spirituality grounded in prayer that Hollings arrived at his particular brand of faith. He was a prolific writer on the subject, publishing some 30 books, including the popular *Hey-Yo!* (1955), *The Living Priesthood* (1977) and *Christ Died at Notting Hill* (1985). Yet Hollings was an unconventional figure, quite prepared to act on his own interpretation of Roman Catholic precepts.

He was progressive, strongly ecumenical, in favour of the ordination of women, and always prepared to speak his mind. He described his attitude to the Church as "an obedience which seems like disobedience", insisting that it was Christ he sought to follow, and that the immediate expression of the Church could sometimes be a stumbling block. Perhaps it was this individuality which, in the end, persuaded him from succeeding Cardinal Heenan as Archbishop of Westminster in 1975.

Michael Richard Hollings was in fact directly descended from an Archbishop of Westminster, Cardinal Weld, on his mother's side. But his father's family were resolutely Church of England.

He was first educated according to his father's faith, but was later sent to the Jesuits at Beaumont College. Aged 17 when the war broke out, he persuaded his mother (his father having died some years earlier) to let him forgo his final year of schooling and try for Oxford immediately. Hollings caught a bus into the nearby city, and returned having somehow charmed his way into acceptance by the St. Catherine's Society.

While at Oxford, Hollings served in the Home Guard, and helped out as an air raid warden in shelters in the Commercial Road area of London. In 1942 he was called up and sent to Sandhurst, and subsequently commissioned into the Coldstream Guards. After a period on King's Guard at Buckingham Palace, he embarked on a highly successful war in North Africa (where he was wounded), Italy and Palestine. He was awarded the Military Cross in 1943 for a bayonet charge led in Italy, capturing seven Germans. He was also mentioned in dispatches. Of this period, Hollings would later say: "God came out of my life and I came in."

With the end of the war, Hollings felt an emptiness in his life which was gradually filled with the return of his faith. He was interviewed for the priesthood by Cardinal Griffin, who, thinking that

Hollings was ten years older than he was, arranged for him to undergo the (abbreviated) preparation for ordination for those with late vocations at the Beda College in Rome. The years in Rome were something of a dark phase for Hollings who struggled with the loss of his previous identity and standing, finding lifelines in stringent living and constant prayer.

Hollings's first posting on his return to England after ordination in 1950 was to St Patrick's Church, Soho Square, then a dilapidated establishment where he once woke to find a rat chewing his hair.

The human diversity of the area fulfilled his hopes of working with people, although his relations with his superiors were somewhat strained. The parish priest disapproved of his accepting invitations to dinner, writing film reviews for *Focus* magazine, and spending time with the theatrical community.

Hollings was particularly irked by the parish policy of refusing to answer the door or telephone while the priests were eating. He determined that he would keep any church in which he might have authority in the future absolutely open to all who needed him.

After four years in Soho, Hollings was instructed to report to Westminster Cathedral to take up work as a chaplain. He was particularly uncomfortable with the pomp

and ceremony attendant on that role, later describing the Pontifical High Mass as having been largely a matter of dressing and undressing the Cardinal to music. Far more satisfying to him was his involvement, from the late 1950s, as religious adviser to various television companies. He considered the rigours of television appearances invaluable to his development as a preacher.

In 1959 Hollings was appointed Chaplain at Oxford University where, to top up his meagre funding, he took to writing, giving talks and running retreats. Here, for the first time, he had a relatively free hand to run things his way, and he vigorously set about putting his open house philosophy into action.

Hollings gradually developed a reputation as a wise counsellor. Doctors, heads of colleges and psychiatrists made extensive use of his services. He was later equally successful in his inner city parishes, as at home with the drug addicts or the Sikhs of Southall as he had been with university undergraduates. During his time at Baywater, the local Notting Hill Carnival was threatened by racial tensions. It was to Michael Hollings that the warring sides turned. He was the one man trusted enough by all to act as mediator.

The esteem in which Hollings was held made it all the more shocking and painful when, in 1996, he was accused in the *News of the World* of having improperly approached an adolescent boy placed in his care 25 years earlier. The diocese of Westminster sent him on enforced "administrative leave" for six months it took the police to decide that there was no basis for any action to be taken. Meanwhile his parishioners rallied to his support, accusing the church authorities of handling the matter ineptly. After he was reinstated, Hollings wrote to friends that he was at peace over the matter, but the strain the episode placed on his already frail health was plain to see.

Despite the ascetic side to Hollings's character (while at the Beda, he developed the habit of sleeping on the floor), he was also more than capable of enjoying the good things of life, including a large gin and tonic from time to time. He particularly loved social meals, which allowed his wit and ready laughter to come into play. He detested pomposity, and would seek to deflate it whenever it arose, and could also seem remote or off-hand if he sensed his valuable time being wasted.

Burke Hollings is survived by an unmarried sister and a brother in the United States.

Church news

The Rev Margaret Bradburn, Warden of Readers and Coordinator of Lay Training (Wakefield); to be also Principal, Wakefield Ministry Scheme.

Canon Julie Butterworth, Team Vicar, St Andrew, Whitsunday, to be Priest-in-charge, Tenterton, St Michael and All Angels, Baywater, and Diocesan Spiritual Adviser (Canterbury).

The Rev Nicholas Ash, Priest-in-charge, Flockburgh and part-time Assistant Stewardship Officer (Carlisle); to be Priest-in-charge, Flockburgh and Carlisle Diocesan Director of Ordinands (Carlisle).

The Rev Peter Bamfitter, Vicar, St James, Taunton; to be also a Prebendary of Wells Cathedral.

The Rev Kenneth Beales, Priest-in-charge, St Stephen, Norwich and Diocesan Director of Ordinands (Norwich); to be an Honorary Canon of Norwich Cathedral.

The Rev James Bell, Adviser for Ministry, Willerden (London); to be Director of Ministry and Training, and Canon Residentiary of Ripon Cathedral.

The Rev David Fudger, Priest-in-charge, St Hugh, Bermondsey (Charterhouse Mission); to be Parish Priest (half-time), The Ascension, Blackheath, and Adviser on Evangelism (half-time), Woolwich Area Mission Team (Southwark).

R

Resignations and retirements

Canon David Baxter, Vice-Provost and Precentor of Wakefield Cathedral; to retire June 28.

The Rev Richard Cloete, Rector, Wincanton, and Pen Somerford (Bath & Wells); to resign March 5.

Canon George Farran, Chancellor of Wells Cathedral; to retire June 30.

The Rev John Furness, Rector, Swyncombe w/ Brill Salome (Oxford); retired January 31.

Canon David Owen, Team Rector, Wincanton Team (Oxford); to retire July 31.

The Rev Leslie Robinson, Vicar, Wymerswold and Prestwold (Leicester); to retire February 28.

The Rev Keith Vivian, Rector, Chew Stoke w/ Northgate (Gloucester).

The Rev Hereward Cooke, Rural Dean of Norwich East, Senior Canon of Norwich.

LANDSCAPE IN ART PICTURES AS REGISTERS OF CHANGE

From A Correspondent

It is commonplace experience that the look of towns and cities alters radically and quickly; that towns transform themselves. The Deft of today looks utterly different from the town in Vernier's "View of Delft." The modification of the open landscape, though slower, proceeds with a greater thoroughness and rapidity than we know.

Mediterranean Europe most likely had its "used" aspect of today 2,000 years ago. Not, however, until about the 15th century did the whole of effective Europe have its occupied and used appearance. And by that time parts of Mediterranean Europe had fallen back towards ruin, through excessive use.

The painters in these backgrounds and landscapes have recorded the substantial changes in the appearance of Europe. It would be more correct, perhaps, to say that they have registered the kind of change, for the record is complete neither for time nor place.

Landscape forced only a slow recognition from the painters, and has not yet properly entered literature.

On that account we depend, for information, on the backgrounds of the early

painters, and are hampered, more or less, by the canvases are passed in review. And

ON THIS DAY

February 24, 1930

The unnamed correspondent who submitted this article was Marcel Arrouez.

the artists' imperfect technique, faulty observation, and habit of making up scenes from memory. With later landscape pictures we have to remember that artists paint chosen scenes and that creative composition adapts the object to its idea. The early Flemings and Italians knew how different the Low Countries and Italy in the 15th century, the former green and growing, the latter barren, and gone to waste. If, however, we study the backgrounds of a chain of artists, such as Giovanni and Gentile Bellini, Raphael, Titian, and Tintoretto, who cover about 150 years of continuous painting, we discern nothing less than the re-afforestation of Italy during the late 15th and the 16th centuries. Trees are planted, grow to be gay saplings, multiply, and gather into woods, as the canvases are passed in review. And

AY FEBRUARY 24

TV LISTING

Opinion

Thought for food

Tunnel vision

COLUMN

PETER RUSSELL

COTTON

THE PAPER

GOON TODAY



TODAY

IN THE TIMES GREAT SEASON OF SPORT

RAIN AND SHINE
Knight leads England to second one-day success PAGE 26

NET LOSS FOR HENMAN
Briton falls at final hurdle in Antwerp PAGE 28

GRAND PRIX 97
20-page supplement
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PULLING TOGETHER
Tug o' War makes its mark Report PAGE 36

TIMES SPORT

MONDAY FEBRUARY 24 1997

WIMBLEDON CRUSH ARSENAL TITLE HOPES AT Highbury



Bould watches helplessly as Jones, right, fires a venomous volley past Lukic in the Arsenal goal to give Wimbledon what proved to be a decisive lead at Highbury yesterday. Photographs: Marc Aspland

Vinnie: 'Veni, vidi, vici'

BY BRIAN GLANVILLE

STRANGE but true, Wimbledon, for ever pleading poverty, have far greater strength in depth than wealthy Arsenal. Which is one of the reasons why they won this windswept game at Highbury, surviving even the early loss of Oyvind Leonhardsen, their outstanding midfield player from Norway, his calf ripped open by an opponent's studs.

Arsenal have no Leonhardsen, and thereby hangs a tale, in which we shall subsequently return. As it was, Wimbledon won with the only goal of the game, volleyed home right-footed by an un-

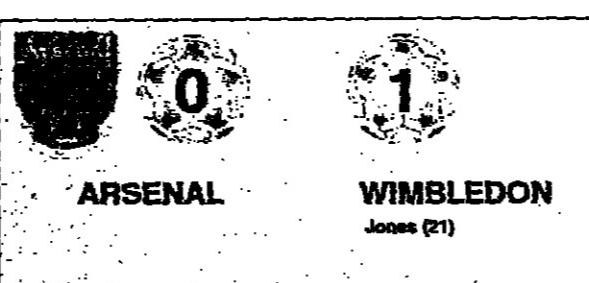
ten away by Remy Garde, Arsenal's French defender. Defender! Well may you ask what the little man was doing in the back three, faced by such towering heavyweights as Marcus Gayle and Efan Ekoku, switched by Kinnear from the right flank into the middle, while Ardley returned on the wing.

But Keown was suspended. Adams was injured and, soon after half-time, Steve Bould, the other member of the usual trio, limped off. Why he was not withdrawn at the interval when so clearly in difficulties remains a mystery.

So there was Garde, signed from Strasbourg shortly before Arsene Wenger took over as the Arsenal manager. If Garde is anything at all, he is a midfield player. But, with Bould off the field, the Arsenal back three — it might have been more sensible to have switched to a back four — consisted of Garde and two other reserves, Marshall and Morrow. Those who fondly remember the old days of Finchley Park Empire speculated that, by the end, the trio might well consist of Wilson, Keppie and Betty.

Back to the goal, Kimble took the corner Bould headed away, but not far enough. Peir, deputising for Leonhardsen, mis-kicked. Ardley crossed and Jones, as we know, thunderously did the rest.

For obscure reasons, the Gunners, since the latter days of George Graham — when he delighted in snubbing Paul Davis — have abandoned their tradition of a general to run the midfield. First, there was Charlie Buchan. Then, most inventive of all, there was the marvellous little Scot, Alex James. After the war, we saw Jimmy Logie,



Jimmy Bloomfield, George Eastham and Liam Brady. And now? A void.

To be fair, things might have been quite different had Ian Wright scored in the thirteenth minute. Bould hit a long ball through the middle. Wright dashed on to it, shot without ceremony, and the ball cannoned off a post.

Did this demoralise Wright? Was he subdued by all that controversy over his clashes with Peter Schmeichel? Wenger, busy last week defending the indefensible, sug-



Jones and Gayle celebrate the Wimbledon winner

Wimbledon showed how much more provident they are by bringing on so coveted a striker as Dean Holdsworth just before the end.

"I've had so much confidence in the side," Kinnear said. "The squad system is working very well."

Wenger put Arsenal's defeat down chiefly to their exertions against Manchester United last Wednesday. "Maybe we are a little bit short in the squad," he said, "but the schedule of the Premiership is not right. To create a regular competition, you need to have everybody playing on the same day and not when it suits them. My players have given everything, and in the second half, we didn't have the physical freshness to score."

Stark contrast with Kinnear, who is only too glad to face such a plethora of fixtures, knowing that it is the consequence — or, as he idiosyncratically puts it, "the victim" — of Wimbledon's success. This, he told us, was a far more benign kind of pressure than not being able to sleep at night, when the team is near the bottom of the table.

Whistling in the wind, Wenger said that all those injuries and suspensions constituted "a good chance for young players to play". Which begs the question of which young players. Though Arsenal were able to present Nicolas Anelka, the brilliant French teenager whom they have filched from under the nose of Paris Saint-Germain. He should, Wenger said, be ready in a couple of weeks.

"I didn't expect us to create as many chances as we did," Kinnear admitted, and their name was legion, for they were many. Just before half-time, Robbie Earle's header gave

Ardley a point-blank chance only for him to miscue. Five minutes into the second half, Earle's header was only just wide. Seventeen minutes from time, Earle powerfully won a tackle with Vieira and put Ardley through. Ekoku put his pass only just wide.

Four minutes later came, perhaps, Wimbledon's best move of the match. Gayle began it with a fine pass to Ekoku. Ekoku crossed, Ardley shot, Lukic blocked, Gayle turned up in the goalmouth to shoot again, but again the drive was blocked in extremis, this time by the resourceful Morrow. A dozen minutes from the end, Gayle had

Mastery wasted 28
New breed delivers 29
Results and tables 30
Vale of tears 31

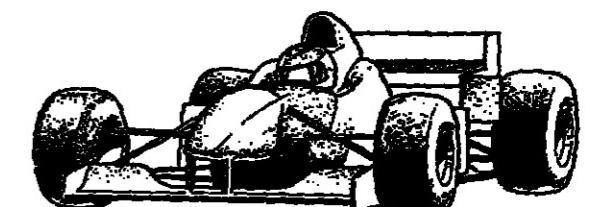
another chance, only to be blocked by Lukic.

Arsenal had their opportunities. In the first half, Sullivan blocked from Merson and saved a header by Dixon. In the second, early on, he dived to catch Bergkamp's long shot and later turned another drive round the post. There were also those two saves from Winterburn.

But there we are. Wimbledon so seldom lose at Highbury, if Wenger is unsure what goes on after games in the tunnel, his team now have a dark one indeed from which to emerge.

ARSENAL (2-3-3): J. Luke — S. Bould (sub S. Merson, 45min), R. Garcia (sub P. Stewart, 45min), D. Holdsworth, C. Dixon, R. Parbo (sub S. Hughes, 49), P. Vieira, N. Winterburn — I. Wright, D. Bergkamp. WIMBLEDON (4-4-2): N. Salter — K. Cunningham, D. Blackwell, C. Perez, A. Jones, V. Jones, S. B. Bould (sub N. Leckhenden (sub P. Fear, 14), R. Earle, N. Ardley, T. E. Ekoku, M. Gayle (sub D. Holdsworth, 58)). Referee: P. Jones

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Eurosport need doubles partner for Mercer

If this was Henman-mania, it was definitely the subdued version. The Antwerp crowd could barely raise a synchronised clap, poor David Mercer was all on his lonesome on Eurosport and the Belgian television producer was having trouble concentrating.

On Friday it was pretty girls wearing peak caps that distracted the cameras. "Not sure about the uniforms, but they're certain to get some attention," Mercer predicted accurately. They featured in every interval in the first set. On Saturday it was late-comers. There was no sneaking in at the back in Antwerp — smile, you're on pan-European television. Yesterday it was a toss-up between Marc Rosset's red tennis shoes ("aparently they remind him of the Swiss national flag," Mer-

cer said) and the girls in the peaked caps again. It was amazing that we got to see any tennis at all.

But we did, and while the result did not go the right way in the final yesterday, it was still a weekend that showed satellite television almost at its best. Not with big blockbuster events, but simply by having the flexibility to show us five sport as it happens whenever it happens. If Nick Knight wanted to thump the winning four at 4.55am then Sky would show it and, hopefully, there were a few others apart from me watching it.

Eurosport, however, seemed a bit slow to recognise the opportunity it had been blessed with when Tim Henman suddenly became the only seed to make it into the quarter-finals of the European Community championship.

Mercer could have done with some support. It's not that he did badly. He was thoroughly researched, impressively objective and unbeatable on players' companions. "That's Lucy, Tim's girlfriend," Mercer told

MATTHEW BOND
TV ACTION REPLAY



Not only did it have live and exclusive coverage of quarter-finals, semi-finals and final, all three Henman games were in weekend prime-time. The Paris-based channel has already learned what effect Henman's presence has on its ratings in Britain.

We are accustomed, however, to having pairs of commentators for all sports these days and Mercer was badly in need of a second voice; somebody to talk technique and tactics with; somebody to give him, and us, a break. With more and more of Eurosport's commentators commendably reporting from site rather than from its Paris studios, finding

us, as the Belgian producer finally took himself away from another close-up of Rosset's shoes. "It was her birthday on Friday."

We are accustomed, however, to having pairs of commentators for all sports these days and Mercer was badly in need of a second voice; somebody to talk technique and tactics with; somebody to give him, and us, a break. With more and more of Eurosport's commentators commendably reporting from site rather than from its Paris studios, finding

enough competent people is an expensive problem for a channel providing commentary in an ever growing number of languages. That, however, is not our problem. There will be many times when the satellite channel will get away with having lone commentators. But, for the time being, Henman in the final of any tournament is not one of them.

Buoyed up (slightly) by Henman's less than convincing semi-final on Saturday afternoon, I determined to make an Antipodean night of it on Sky. After all, there is only a couple of weekends until the Australian Grand Prix. I needed the practice... rather badly as it turned out.

Sky is absolutely wedded to commentary partnerships, so the evening began with Bob Willis and Ian Botham, which is not the most fun you will

ever hear on television. After that it was the excellent Mark Nicholas and the equally impressive New Zealander, Ian Smith. Then it was Paul Allott and Botham... and then, suddenly, it was 4.30am, England were 90-something for three and somehow needed less than 40 runs off ten overs. Very gently, Allott and Smith — presumably for the sake of insomniacs who happened to be joining them at that ungodly hour — explained about the rain. Suddenly, falling asleep did not seem such a bad move.

I blame the lack of running rock music for my poor showing, for despite Nicholas promising us at the outset that this was "mazzatza at its very best", I had forgotten that you hardly get to hear any of it on Sky. Once a wicket falls, it's one replay and straight into an ad break. Sweet dreams.

Sorenstam savours flying start to season

ANNIKA SORENSTAM won the Hawaiian Women's Open by one stroke from Meg Mallon to record her second victory in three tournaments on the United States Ladies Professional Golf Association Tour this year. Sorenstam, of Sweden, had a round of 73, one over par, to record a final score of 206 at the Kapolei course.

Sorenstam's start to the season is the best on the Tour since Beth Daniel won twice in the first five events of 1990. "I'm amazed," Sorenstam said, after surviving a bogey on the 18th hole. "I have the right frame of mind. I hope this momentum continues." Mallon had a final round of 70, but her challenge faded with bogeys on the 17th and 18th holes. The next US LPGA event is the Australian Masters next week.

Maier makes his mark

SKIING: Hermann Maier, of Austria, captured his first World Cup victory when he won the super giant slalom in Garmisch-Partenkirchen, Germany, yesterday. Maier, who missed the recent world championships with a broken arm, beat Kristian Ghedina, of Italy, by more than half a second in a time of 1min 21.6sec, while two Norwegians, Atle Skaarda and Lasse Kjus, shared third place after completing their runs down the 2,070-metre Kandahar course in identical times of 1min 22.2sec. Luc Alphand, of France, who won the downhill race on Saturday, finished sixth and extended his overall World Cup lead.

Christie wins on grass

ATHLETICS: Linford Christie, right, competing on grass for the first time since his school days, won a £120,000 race over 120 metres in Botany Bay, Sydney, yesterday. Christie, the former Olympic 100 metres champion, picked up £21,000 (about £10,000), winning in 12.03sec from Tony Marshall, of Australia. Darren Campbell, of Great Britain, finished third.



Price savours victory

GOLF: Nick Price, of Zimbabwe, promised himself a holiday after beating David Frost in a play-off in the Alfred Dunhill PGA in South Africa. Price had a nervous wait after a final round of 66 for 269 as Frost fought back to level matters with a birdie on the 18th — and force Price back on to the Houghton Golf Club course. Price made par at the first play-off hole to beat Frost after the latter missed his putt.

Whitakers lead way

EQUESTRIANISM: John Whitaker, of Virtual Village Granusch, just pipped Michael, his brother, for first place as he led a remarkable clean sweep by British riders in the Volvo World Cup qualifier in Bologna, Italy, yesterday. Geoff Billington was third and Robert Smith fourth in a 12-horse jump off. It was the second win in the qualifying series this season for John Whitaker.

England lose record

RUGBY UNION: The England women's team suffered their first defeat since 1991 when France sneaked a 17-15 victory — their first over England — at Franklins Gardens yesterday. Nathalie Arnell scored the match-winning try in the 73rd minute to crown a memorable individual performance that included creating a try for Bertrand, the No 8.

Muggeridge thrown out

BADMINTON: Jo Muggeridge, right, England's most successful women's singles player for much of the past four years, has been thrown out of the national training squad after a row with Steve Baddiley, the England manager. The disagreement, which ended with Muggeridge tipping a can of drink over Baddiley's head, was over Muggeridge's level of fitness.



French are mustard

SAILING: A tight finish is likely between Hervé Laurent and Marc Thiercelin, the Frenchmen, in the Vendée Globe non-stop single-handed race round the world as they challenge for second place behind Christophe Auguin, who won on *Géodis*. Yesterday Laurent had only 680 miles to go to the finish at Les Sables d'Olonne and Thiercelin had 710 still to complete.

South spurred by Stearn

LACROSSE: South became the women's territorial champions in convincing style when they won all their five games over two weekends, finishing with a 16-1 victory against British Universities, a 7-6 success over East and a 15-0 defeat of Midlands at Weybridge yesterday. Their only possible threat was East, who went 2-0 up early in the game, but Di Stearn settled the match with the winning goal.

SNOW REPORTS

	Depth L (cm) U	Conditions Piste Off/p	Runs to resort	Weather (Temp) °C	Last snow
ANDORRA	40 180	good heavy	fair	fine	1 15/2
AUSTRIA	40 180	good heavy	good	sun	2 21/2
Obergurgl	25 60	(Superb riding conditions everywhere)			
SSR	25 60	good heavy	fair	sun	5 19/2
(Warm sunshine, some slush on south-facing runs)					
FRANCE	115 260	good	heavy	good	5 18/2
Alpe d'Huez	115 210	good	varied	good	4 20/2
Val d'Isère	115 210	good	varied	good	4 20/2
(Good skiing in warm sunshine)					
ITALY	90 200	good	varied	good	3 20/2
Livigno	90 200	good	varied	good	3 20/2
(Good skiing on most pistes; some icy spots low down)					
NORWAY	60 70	fair	varied	slushy	1 21/2
Galo	60 70	Pistes holding up but surfaces slightly slushy			
(Good skiing on most pistes; some icy spots low down)					
SWITZERLAND	10 100	good	varied	slushy	5 19/2
Wengen	10 100	good	varied	slushy	sun

High are denied

SNOOKER: SCOT DISMISSES DRAGO TO KEEP WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP IN HIS SIGHTS

Hendry's timing proves impeccable

By PHIL YATES
STEPHEN HENDRY, the winner of the International Open title in Aberdeen on Saturday, flies to Malta today for the European Open unconcerned that recent success, allied with a hectic schedule, could lead to burn-out before the world championship.

Hendry again underlined his position as the dominant force in the sport by trouncing Tony Drago 9-1 to win the first world-ranking tournament staged in Scotland.

It was his 28th triumph in a ranking event, equaling the record set by Steve Davis

"Anyway, whenever you go to Sheffield, you get a real buzz simply from being there."

Hendry, who meets Jamie Burnett, his Scottish compatriot, in the first round of the European Open at the Mediterranean Conference Centre, Valletta, tomorrow evening, has lost only one of his past 21 matches in ranking tournaments.

As a consequence, he has established a healthy buffer zone between himself and the chasing pack at the head of the provisional world rankings.

Ruthlessly exploiting Drago's susceptibility to un-

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Henman to make breakthrough

TENNIS: BIG-HITTING ROSSET TEACHES BRITON UNCOMFORTABLE LESSON IN COMMUNITY RELATIONS

Henman fails to make final breakthrough

FROM ANDREW LONGMORE IN ANTWERP

THE faces of John McEnroe, Ivan Lendl and Pete Sampras looked down from the walls of the Sports Palace in Antwerp, beckoning Tim Henman into an exclusive band of past champions. Four Wimbledon champions—and two finalists—had won this tournament down the years, but Henman will have to wait his turn.

Henman was beaten 6-2, 7-6, 6-4 by Marc Rosset, the outsize Swiss, and left Antwerp for his next stop, Milan, with a silver tray instead of a gold-studded racket and more than a few problems to sort out in his game. The positive point, as Henman said, was that he reached the final of the European Community championship and earned a handy \$85,600 (about £53,500) without playing at his best. Henman will move up in the world rankings close to his career best of No 14, but much of the form that took him to his first ATP Tour title, in Sydney, and his first final, in Doha, has temporarily deserted him.

"I've been mentally and physically strong and I've kept battling," he said. However, against a player of Rosset's power and experience, simple scrapping proved inadequate. No part of his game worked to order. His first service was erratic, his ground strokes of both wings were woefully insecure and his tactics questionable.

Instead of manoeuvring his 6ft 7in opponent around the court, he lost patience too often and tried to outwit him from

the back of the court. On one occasion that he worked his way into the net, early in the second set, he won solid approval from David Felgate, his coach. However, in the face of some forceful serving, he could not capitalise on the moment.

To be fair to Henman, who is playing only his third Tour— and first best-of-five set—final, Rosset is an awkward customer at the best of times. Nobody, least of all, you



Rosset: powerful

suspect, Rosset himself, knows quite what is coming next. On his bad days, Rosset, the former Olympic champion can be awful; at his best, he is a match for anyone. This was one of his better days, particularly on his first serve.

Whenever Henman had a

glimmer of an opportunity,

Rosset rummaged through his service locker and produced a winner. He served 16 aces, the last to win the match after 2hr 09min, many of the earlier

Davenport hits back

LINDSAY DAVENPORT, the Olympic champion of the United States, recovered to beat Kimberly Po, her compatriot and the No 3 seed, 14, 6-2, 6-3, in Oklahoma City on Saturday to secure a place in the final of the Women's Tennis Association JGA Classics.

Davenport, who is the No 1 seed, will now face yet another United States player in Lisa Raymond, who overcame the unseeded Francis Lubiani, of Italy, 6-1, 6-0, in 41 minutes in the other semi-final.

Davenport, seeking her eighth career singles crown, avenged a loss to Po in the fourth round of the Australian Open championships last month. Po was also picked for the Fed Cup team when Davenport, who played so well in the competition for three years, was not.

"Getting to the final is great," Davenport said. "Winning this match feels good because I tried really hard and did not get down on myself. For sure I felt like I escaped with a victory. I definitely got a little lucky."

Two more double faults early in the third set effectively ended any lingering chance of a comeback and, though

there are not many plus points I can take from today."

Henman did finally break back at 3-3 in the third set. Rosset broke for the final time with a backhand pass down the line in the next game. A first-service mark of 39 per cent told its own tale.

Henman said, "I might seem fairly philosophical about it all on the outside, but those close to me will see a different reaction. This hurts more than my defeat [by Jim Courier] in Doha, because I played a good match there."

Kindly, Rosset put his opponent's display down to inexperience. "He has not played many best-of-five set matches and it is small details like that which can make the difference," he said. Henman might, in time, take comfort from the knowledge that McEnroe also experienced defeat on his first visit to Antwerp, 15 years ago.

Henman drives a fierce backhand from the baseline during his defeat yesterday

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GOLF: WOOLNOUGH CONQUERS HIGH WIND AND A LEGEND TO REACH THE SEMI-FINALS OF PUTTER

Dexter has no complaints about the 'boss'

BY JOHN HOPKINS
GOLF CORRESPONDENT

THE wind continued to roar bearing both larksong and the insistent thrashing of the sea to parts of the Rye Golf Club, but, for Ted Dexter, the oldest man in the quarter-finals, the President's Putter is over. Dexter was beaten by Andy Woolnough 2 and 1 in an absorbing match in which the 35 years between them made no difference.

There were no complaints from the older man about the result. "He had a couple of three-putt errors that let me in, but there was never much

doubt who was the boss," Dexter said. Woolnough, the winner of this event in 1995, had had some misgivings about facing Dexter, who is 61. "I knew he was a steady player and very consistent, so I was pleased to hole some putts at the start," he said.

Woolnough, 26, seemed to have matters under control when he led by three holes at the turn, deficit getting down in two from the left of the 9th green. Then, however, a slack drive on the 10th, a nervous-looking miss on the 11th and three more putts on the 13th allowed Dexter to draw level.

Down the years, Dexter's

bali striking has been a by-word among the members of the Oxford and Cambridge Golfing Society, rather like his cars. It was, however, the way that Woolnough struck his second shot to the 12th with a driver, his three-iron to the

13th, his tee shot with a four-iron to the 14th, his three-iron second shot to the 15th and the stroke played with a driver from the 17th tee to within ten feet of the flag that caught the eye. These were the strokes of

a man who is good enough to try for a living as a professional even if he has not yet made it and even if he is probably a little too short off the tee to do so.

John Nash faced a four-foot putt on the 15th to go to one up against Charlie Roheroe, the champion. Nash missed that, but chirped wonderfully from the 17th tee to save the 16th. He appeared to have taken the initiative on the 17th, when his tee shot struggled to the edge of the green while Roheroe's ran into a bunker.

Within the space of the next two strokes, this match altered completely. First, Nash's sec-

ond shot ended well short of the hole. Then, Roheroe got out to six feet and, after Nash had missed for a three, holed his putt to go one up. A ten-foot putt on the 18th gave him victory by two holes and the reward of a match against Woolnough this morning.

In the bottom half, Richard Sanders, having escaped from three down with four to play to

win on the last against William Dugdale in the morning,

was unable to reproduce such an escape after lunch. He lost to Jamie Warman. Simon Ellis, the captain of the Tonbridge Halford Hewitt team, beat Mark Benka.

BOWLS

Cumbrian recovery halts Kent

ON ONE of the busiest weekends on the bowling calendar, Cumbria staged a remarkable comeback against Kent, who held a 25-shot lead after ten ends, to reach the final of the Liberty Trophy (David Rhys Jones writes). In the final they will meet Nottingham, at Melton Mowbray, on April 13.

In Belfast, Ireland won the Waterford Crystal Trophy and Llanelli lifted the Greengauge Welsh inter-club title at Cymon Vale. Yesterday Teignbridge and North Walsham were the first clubs through to the semi-finals of the national mixed inter-club championship, with victories over Dolphin and Handy Cross, respectively.

Llanelli's victory over a clutch of ambitious crown green bowlers from the Prestatyn-based Firth club

gave them the Welsh club title for the second time in three years.

In Scotland, Prestwick re-

tained their CIS Insurance Seniors Scottish League title when their back to beat Midlothian 62-50 at Paisley.

HOCKEY: NATIONAL LEAGUE SURPRISE PACKAGE CANTERBURY BOW OUT OF HA CUP

Gritty Chelmsford upset the odds

BY SYDNEY FRISKIN

CANTERBURY, the surprise package of the National League, made an unexpected exit from the fifth round of the Hockey Association Cup yesterday with a 2-1 defeat at Chelmsford, one of the leading teams in the Adams East League.

Canterbury made a promising start with a goal in the eighth minute by by Hollingworth; but Chelmsford hit back a minute before half-time with an equaliser by Thorogood, and then went

ahead in the 49th minute when Hawkins converted a short corner. Chelmsford's defence was put under pressure by Canterbury, who forced 15 short corners, all of which came to nothing as the home side held on to their advantage with great determination.

Old Loughtonians battled to a 2-1 home win over injury-hit Hounslow. A facial injury suffered by Nurse, Hounslow's short corner specialist, then added to their problems. Old Loughtonians led 2-0 at half-time with an equaliser by Thorogood, and then went

medal play-offs but, in a tense struggle, they were forced to give second best to Club de Campo, of Spain, who won 5-4, leaving the English club with nothing to show from a disappointing weekend. In the B Division, Edinburgh Ladies finished on a high by taking the title at Brescia in Italy.

Ipswich, meanwhile, took full advantage of Slough's absence to race to the top of the National Outdoor League table. When the league went into its winter recess at the start of December, Ipswich were in second place in the

premier division, and struggling to catch Slough, who boasted a vastly superior goal difference. But, after beating Hounslow 6-1 on Saturday, Ipswich are now in pole position.

It took a Hounslow goal, courtesy of Yana Williams, to kick Ipswich into top gear and from there they never looked back. At half-time they were 3-1 ahead, thanks to a penalty corner from Kirsten Spencer, a penalty stroke from Sandra Lister and an individual effort from Leisa King. Tracy Fry, Sarah Bamfield and Vicki Sandall added the other goals.

They only edged into the semi-finals on goal difference before falling to Russelshiemer, the eventual champions. The Germans proved too strong as they recorded a 6-4 victory.

The defeat put Slough into the bronze



ATHLETICS

Mayock's trial tribulations tarnish record

BY DAVID POWELL, ATHLETICS CORRESPONDENT

FIVE British records fell yesterday and, deserving though the athletes were of applause, none is likely to win an individual medal at the world indoor championships in Paris next month without improving further. In the case of John Mayock, who set new figures for 3,000 metres, he is not even sure of a ticket for the team plane, let alone a medal.

However, Mayock's omission, should that prove the unlikely scenario, will be a minor controversy by comparison with one involving Ashia Hansen. She was only two centimetres away from providing Britain with a sixth national record yesterday but Malcolm Arnold, the head coach, was adamant that she would not be selected for Paris because she had not competed in the trials.

The Great Britain selectors announced their team today, having met last night after a highly successful climax to the Ricoh indoor grand prix in Birmingham. Spectators enjoyed the new made-for-television presentation, with flashing lights, music and game show-style introductions. Oh, yes, athletes as well.

In between the strains of Time Turner, the Stones and others, the sport lived up to the prediction of Ian Stewart, the British Athletic Federation head of events, that this would be at least the equal of any previous indoor meeting in Britain. It may have lacked the one big memorable moment, but quality was in abundance.

Ato Boldon, from Trinidad, the Olympic 100 and 200 metres bronze medal-winner, was the athlete of the meeting.

He won the 60 and 200 metres, in 6.49 seconds and 20.35, and said he intended to "throw a monkey-wrench in the works" of the fastest-man-in-the-world race between Michael Johnson and Donovan Bailey next May by breaking the 100 metres world record in April.

The standard was such that, for much of the afternoon, there was no sign of a British winner in an international event, although there were the records: Donna Fraser, winning a domestic 200 metres in 20.06sec; Mayock, fourth in the 3,000 metres in 7min 43.1sec; Debbie Marti, second in the high jump with 1.95 metres; Janine Whillock, third

in the pole vault with 3.90 metres; Phyllis Smith, second in the 400 metres in 51.69secs, shaving 0.01sec off Sally Gunnell's record.

Gunnell, though fourth, confirmed she would compete in Paris, mainly because Britain has a strong 4x400 metres relay team, especially in view of the form of Fraser and Smith. Fraser, who clipped 0.01sec off Katherine Merritt's British record, has hitherto been regarded as a 400 metres athlete.

British victories came with a rush in the closing events.

Boldon: sprint double



Boldon: sprint double

from Jamie Baulch in the 400 metres, in 45.74sec. Steve Smith in the high jump, with 2.34 metres and Hansen, with 14.57 metres. Baulch is the one outstanding hope of an individual gold medal in Paris, with Smith the next best bet. Other than these two, only Hansen carries the gold standard.

Arnold, though, was adamant that athletes who missed the trials should be omitted, unless they had been ill, informed the federation and supplied a doctor's note. Hansen had not, Mayock had.

However, Mayock's selection is not that simple. Ian Gillespie broke Stewart's 25-year Scottish record, with 7:49.86, but faces exclusion in favour of Mayock. The Yorkshireman said he sent a doctor's certificate to David Cropper, the chairman of selectors, and Cropper yesterday acknowledged receipt of it.

Mike Down, Gillespie's coach, is mystified. "I find it hard to believe that the chairman of selectors, chief national coach and promotions officer had no awareness of the doctor's note on the day of the trials," Down said.

BASKETBALL

Bullets shoot to summit

BY NICHOLAS HARLING

FOR a team that seems to spend half its week on the treatment table, Birmingham Bullets are not doing badly. Play-off champions last spring, the Bullets took over as outright leaders of the Budweiser League for the first time this season by playing through the pain for a 110-96 victory away to Worthing Bears on Saturday.

The main problem for Nick Nurse, the club's conscientious coach, is not so much rival teams but the fitness of his own. "We can do it so long as we stay healthy," Nurse said, knowing that his players are at present anything but fully fit.

Tony Dorsey, the league's leading scorer, contributed another 34 points, but he has, according to Harry Wrubleski, the Birmingham chairman, "a knee that needs to be operated on and an ankle, looking like a football, that badly needs to be looked at".

Fabulous Flournoy has been suffering from flu and Scott Wilkes from a temperature of 103F. That's the spirit Nick brings out in people," Wrubleski said. "No one wants to lie down and miss games."

Billy Ross became a further casualty when he was poked in the eye before the Bullets could secure their tenth successive win.

It was while Ross, the high-scoring guard, was recovering that the Bears assembled a 13-0 burst, reducing arrears of 70-56 to a single point. Ross duly returned, his eyesight clearly none too impaired, to score three more three-pointers in the final quarter, taking him to eight in all and a tally

of 30 points, three more than Nigel Lloyd.

The main threats to Bullets had come from Cleve Lewis and James Hamilton, the scorers of 24 points apiece for the Bears, who could not quite accomplish the kind of shock results that were achieved by Leicester Riders and Crystal Palace.

Beaten in all five previous games by Chester Jets, Leicester won 105-87 to virtually end their title hopes. Leon McGee, who finished with 34 points, led the way with three early three-pointers among the nine that Leicester managed from 11 attempts inside the first 15 minutes.

Leicester's win and Derby Storm's 105-95 home defeat by Palace meant that Derby are favourites to miss out on the eighth qualifying place for the play-offs.

NETBALL

England aim is world No 1

BY A SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

FIFTY leading England netball coaches, players and administrators spent the weekend fine-tuning a world-class performance plan, designed to lift England from its present world No 4 ranking to No 1 by 2003.

FOOTBALL: ANFIELD PREMIERSHIP PRETENSIONS DENTED BY BLACKBURN'S DETERMINED DEFENCE

Liverpool's mastery counts for nought

Liverpool 0
Blackburn Rovers 0

By Peter Ball

IF LIVERPOOL fail to win the FA Carling Premiership, Blackburn Rovers will figure prominently in the post-mortem examination. November's Blackburn marked the start of their revival under Tony Parkes with a comprehensive victory at Ewood Park; on Saturday, at the end of another eventful week in east Lancashire, they hung on staunchly to secure a draw at Anfield.

If anything, the game on Saturday might prove the more significant and not just because it prevented Liverpool from overtaking Manchester

Full results and league tables ... Page 30

United. "Gary Flitcroft [the Blackburn midfield player] said to me 'You could be 6-0 up,'" Jamie Redknapp said afterwards, and Flitcroft's testimony revealed the extent of Liverpool's domination, grittily as Hendry and his cohorts resisted.

There, though, is the rub. It is a football cliché that championship winners get results when not playing well. On Saturday Liverpool played excellently and still did not win. They have now dropped 15 points at home.

The two points lost on Saturday were not just down to heroics in the Blackburn defence, where Hendry breached defences. Berg was calm and steady and, in front of them, McKinlay made as many tackles and interceptions in one game as David Batty does in a month. "Hendry and Berg are an awesome pairing," Tim Flowers, the goalkeeper, said.



Blackburn's resolve is evident as Collymore attempts to break through for Liverpool at Anfield. Photograph: Clive Brunskill / Allsport

For all that, Liverpool created half a dozen chances. In the first half Flowers had a miserable time in the swirling wind, misjudging several crosses. He was unlucky with one, which brought him a booking for inadvertently handling outside the penalty area — a harsh decision by Martin Bowden, the referee, who saw no evil in Ian Wright's challenge last Wednesday.

That, however, was the extent of Flowers's bad luck. He made a fine save from a free kick by Redknapp, but his

struggles in the air should have seen Liverpool home by half-time. From one cross by Redknapp, with Flowers stranded, Fowler headed against a post with the goal exposed; from another, with the goalkeeper again groping thin air, Mark Wright shot over. "A great chance, but somehow I seemed to kick it over the bar," Wright said.

That — with Fowler having a rare off day, missing five or six gilt-edged chances and having no luck when an effort curled round Flowers came

out off a post — was the story of Liverpool's afternoon. Collymore did not have a worthwhile opportunity; everybody else missed.

It could have been even worse for Liverpool. David James escaping the award of a penalty against him for bringing down Gallacher. "I can't say too much about the referee because he did give us a couple of throw-ins," Parkes said, "but we can't really grumble about anything today, because we've had the

luck." "I think the club are looking for someone more long-term, looking for a bigger name who is going to buy big-name players and get the club back to what it was two years ago,"

Parkes said. It is tempting to say that, if Sir John Smith had thought that way, nobody would have heard of Bob Paisley. Blackburn, though, are not Liverpool and, with further rumblings of players wanting to follow Alan Shearer, a big-name manager might not make it permanent?

LIVERPOOL (4-4-2): D James — B Wilson, S Mollo, J McNaughton, R Barnes, S1 Birnby — S McManaman — R Fowler, S Collymore. BLACKBURN (4-4-2): T Finney — H Bell, C Hooper, G Le Saux — T Sherwood, W McNaughton, G Flitcroft — K Gallacher, J Wilcox — C Sutton (sub: P Pedersen, 82min). Referee: M Bowden.

Scholar and Wray set to take over Forest

By Jason Nisbet

IRVING SCHOLAR, late of Tottenham Hotspur, and Nigel Wray, the owner of Saracens, look certain to take control of Nottingham Forest tonight after their only remaining rivals bidding for the struggling FA Carling Premiership club gave up the fight yesterday.

The consortium led by Albert Scardino, a former press officer for Bill Clinton, was holed below the waterline when Mercury Asset Management, one of its two City backers, withdrew, professing the belief that market for football clubs was too high.

Mercury was looking to invest now in the hope of floated Forest, but said it thought the market for football clubs would weaken over the next 18 months. A fourth bidder, Grant Bovey, also lost his backing earlier this month after posting an offer to Forest shareholders.

Scholar and Wray will now go forward with a bid that

pitches £16 million into Forest and gives up to £3 million to the 209 shareholders who have to vote by a 75 per cent majority to accept the deal. This is by no means certain, as the previous special general meeting last month threw out the £11 million offer from Sandy Anderson, the Rangers-supporting rail tycoon, after Scholar circulated a letter saying that he was able to come up with a higher bid.

The Scholar-Wray team, which also includes Phil Soar,

Milosevic lets Forest off hook

Nottingham Forest 0
Aston Villa 0

By Brian Glanville

SAVO MILOSEVIC might have scored twice, but he missed in the first half and was given offside, controversially but not outrageously, in the second. So Villa got no goals and Forest survived. Today a shareholders' meeting may decide the fate of the club, let alone the team, and it is a team still in trouble.

On Saturday, with Stuart Pearce, the player-manager, suspended, and Ian Woan being sent on far too late, they just about survived. Pearce did not go to the press conference. Instead, he sent the team's fitness trainer, with the message: "We never played well at all, to be fair, but we've grinded [sic] out a result, and that's the kind of thing we've got to go on doing to the end of the season."

Had Milosevic scored when it seemed difficult to miss, all the grinding in the world would scarcely have sufficed.

Had Pearce, the player-

manager, deserved a better response when, with 17 minutes played, he spun superbly between Phillips and Chettle, sped on towards goal and, unselfishly and precisely, laid the ball off to his left. Milosevic was all alone. The pass came to his favoured left foot but he hit it hopelessly wide.

Brian Little, the Villa manager, said: "You've got to make the goalkeeper save it, and the goal would have been a good one for us." One good enough, no doubt, to have ensured eventual victory.

A few minutes from time, with Villa relentlessly calling the tune, Haaland, Forest's Norway midfield player, carelessly headed back, straight to Draper. On went the ball to Milosevic, Yorkie and, in the goal zone, Milosevic again. He made contact and the ball found its way in, but the linesman's flag had already gone up.

"We didn't really see anything wrong with the goal," Little said. "The linesman said Dwight was offside, which we find hard to believe. We didn't

see any appeal from them, so it's a major disappointment to us. The lads were in charge of the game and we should have won."

So they should. Time and again Fernando Nelson and the tiny Alan Wright (why does he never play for England?) took the ball away from the adventurous wing backs, went flying down the flanks and Forest's defence held out at full stretch.

Nigel Clough, returning to the side, was a peripheral figure in midfield, where once upon a time their attacks swirled so dangerously around him.

In the second half Forest barely escaped when Milosevic, Wright (twice) and Yorke were involved in a movement down the left that ended with Wright squeezing the ball across from the byline. Draper got in a header and Chettle headed out from behind the bar.

Forest did not have a shot on goal until the 57th minute, a weak one from Clough that gave Bosnich no trouble at all. Indeed, the only real save that the Villa goalkeeper had to

make was after fully 87 minutes. Clough found Bart-Williams on the left but Bosnich ploughed on the drive.

Crossley, in Forest's goal, had been a great deal busier. When Townsend hit a loose ball, untypically, with his right foot, Crossley turned it for a corner. He did the same with Yorke's shot after a fine run and cross by Nelson.

Forest's defence never got to grips with Yorke, who combined great skill with power, flair and speed.

"We played well enough really to have got something," Little said. "We sensed it was a good day today to come here and play."

Pearce or no Pearce, a good few other teams are bound to think the same way. To stay in the FA Carling Premiership, Forest will have to do a great deal more grinding.

NOTTINGHAM FOREST (4-4-2): M Crossley — D Little, S Chettle, C Cooper, C Phillips — C Fergusson, A1 Haaland, C Boilesen, S Cormican. D Saunders, C Ray (sub: Wearn, 77min).

ASTON VILLA (3-5-2): M Bosnich — U Emre, S Schuster, C Johnson (77min), A. Townsend, A Wright — D Yorkie, S Milosevic. Referee: G Barber.

Scholar and Wray will now go forward with a bid that

will be recognised as a

success if it is accepted.

By Jason Nisbet

MOBILE phones, cars, jewellery and fizzy drinks are all advertised in the Middlesbrough programme. Also in there is a glum figure in monochrome and beneath his wet weekend of a face it reads "Whatever you're going through, we'll go through it with you." The Samaritans clearly know how to select prime advertising sites.

Middlesbrough are now five points adrift of safety in the FA Carling Premiership and have won just two league matches in the past five months. If Bryan Robson, their manager, was to reach for the phone, he would lament his team's wretched luck and insist that his side is too enterprising, too resourceful, too damn good, in fact, for relegation.

They might deny the claim, but thereafter it looked suspiciously as if Newcastle were prepared to settle for a slender victory. Tellingly, Giola, Asprilla and Beardley, their three most imaginative players, remained on the bench. There were other signs, such as their policy of releasing everyone back for corners and Gillespie rarely crossing the halfway line.

Middlesbrough's ill fortune continued. Ravanelli chased through and Hislop bounded before him, but the fall merely propelled the goalkeeper even more quickly to the ball. A strong header by Stamp hit Ravanelli's shoulder and fell gently into Hislop's arms. Pearson's powerful header hit the underside of the bar and bounced free. Finally, a delicate chip from Beck was scooped from the line by Peacock, and the ball once again fell into Hislop's reach.

"Some days they fly into the top corner of the net, on others

they are straight at the keeper," Robson said. "If we keep playing like that, we are going to get the breaks. We never got one today. If we keep it up from now until May, we will win a lot more than we lose."

Kenny Dalglish, the

Newcastle manager, did not deny that luck had played its part. "We were fortunate to score three points," he said. On Ravanelli's disallowed goal, he was brilliantly evasive. "The ref might have been right, he might have been wrong," he said.

The referee was, in fact, almost certainly wrong, but this is merely another injustice that Middlesbrough can reasonably complain about. "The ref might have been right, he might have been wrong," he said.

MIDDLESBROUGH (4-3-2-1): B Roberts — N Cox, G Finch, S Vickers (sub: N Pearson), Y. Beck, C Fergusson, C Haaland, S Stobbs, S. Johnson, M Moore (sub: S. Johnson), G Stamp, S8 — Juszczo — F. Ravanelli, M Beck.

NEWCASTLE UNITED (3-5-2): S Heskey — S. Johnson, N. Johnson, K. Gibson, S. Lee, N. Brown, L. Clark, R. Ellington, L. Shears, L. Ferdinand. Referee: S Dunn.

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Ferdinand: winning goal

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CHELSEA (1) 1 MANCHESTER UTD (0) 1
Bacham 68
20:30
Chelsea v Middlesbrough, G. F. Smith, 45min; D. Petersen
(etc. & 5th); A. Smith, P. Leitch, S. Clark, J. Hughes, D.
Wig, R. O. Mateo, F. Sinclair, E. Newton, G. Zola, S. Milne
(sub: E. Johnson, 70min).
Manchester United: P. Schmeichel, S. Neville, D. Innes,
S. Carragher, S. Keane, R. Gago (sub: S. Carragher, 80min),
B. McCairn, R. Keane, R. Johnson (sub: D. May, 90min). O. G. Salazar.
Booked: Keane.
Referee: G. Astley.

CONVENTRY (0) 0 EVERTON (0) 0
10:45
Conventry City: S. Osgood, S. Parker, P. Williams, G. Grace, S.
Watts, S. Walsh, S. Taylor (sub: S. Wilson, 57min), N.
Davies, M. Hall, D. Odette, S. Hockney.
Everton: P. Gerrard, D. Unsworth, D. Watson, C. Short, E.
Stevens, J. P. McInnes, G. Speed, N. Barnaby, C. Thompson, S. Stent,
D. Ferguson.
Referee: J. Water

LEICESTER (3) 4 DERBY (2)
Meadow Lane, 24, 27
20:30
Leicester City: K. Miller, S. Gaynor, J. Lawrence, S. Prior, J.
Watts, S. Walsh, S. Taylor (sub: S. Wilson, 57min), N.
Campbell, G. Parkin, S. Lodge, P. Adams, S. Parker, S.
Davies, J. P. McInnes, G. Speed (sub: J. Lawren, 45min),
C. Short, E. Stevens, D. Ferguson, A. Asprilla, A. Ward, P.
Trifunovic, L. Goss, C. Dally (sub: M. Rahmberg, 82min), P.
McCormick, S. Wilson, S. Smith.
Booked: Parker.
Referee: P. Davies.

LIVERPOOL (0) 0 BLACKBURN (0) 0
40:47
Liverpool: D. Jones, J. McLean, B. Keane, M. Wright, D.
McKenna, S. Bowes, S. McDonald, J. Barrett, D.
Rodriguez, S. Colman, R. Fowler.
Blackburn: R. Powers, T. Powers, J. Keane, T. Stewart, C.
Henderson, G. Sutcliffe, C. Bell, C. Powell (sub: J. Lawren, 45min),
J. Simpson, D. Stoeness, A. Asprilla, A. Ward, P.
Trifunovic, L. Goss, C. Dally (sub: M. Rahmberg, 82min), P.
McCormick, S. Wilson, S. Smith.
Booked: Powers.
Referee: M. Bodenham.

MIDDLESBROUGH (0) 0 NEWCASTLE (0)
20:30
Middlesbrough: F. Robert, N. Cox, S. Roberts, R. Marton, M.
Johnson, J. Keane, F. Rossell, A. Morris, S. Fleming, S. Fazio, C.
Spirito.
Booked: Roberts.
Newcastle United: S. Heslop, S. Wilson, R. Elliott, J. Clark, D.
Fernandez, W. Barker.
Booked: Heslop.
Referee: S. Daws.

NOTTS FOREST (0) 0 ASTON VILLA (0) 0
23:30
Nottingham Forest: M. Dunster, D. Lytle, C. Cooper, S.
Chester, C. Bell, S. Lodge, P. Adams, S. Parker, S.
Davies, M. Hall, D. Odette, S. Hockney.
Aston Villa: P. Gerrard, F. Nelson, A. Wright, U. Ghiggia, S.
Vassell, S. Wilson, S. Smith, G. Speed, C. Thompson, J. Taylor, M.
Drapier, A. Asprilla, D. Yates, S. McKeown.
Booked: Nelson, P. Jones.

SOUTHAMPTON (2) 2 SHEFFIELD WED (0) 3
15:00
Southampton: M. Taylor, A. Nelson, S. Charles (sub: M.
McDonald, 45min), S. Wilson, S. Lodge, S. Parker, S.
Davies, M. Hall, D. Odette, S. Hockney.
Sheffield Wednesday: P. Adams, S. Parker, S. Wilson, S.
Davies, M. Hall, D. Odette, S. Hockney.
Booked: Wilson, Parker, S. Wilson, S. Lodge.
Referee: M. Odell.

SUNDERLAND (0) 0 LEEDS (0) 1
21:00
Sunderland: I. Perez, G. Hall, M. Scott, A. Melville, G. Ord, M.
Santos (sub: I. Perez, 45min).

**GRAV (sub: C. Russell, Stein), D. Williams (sub: M. Stone),
P. Russell, K. Bell, D. Kelly, J. Mullin (sub: A. Yeats),
S. Bowles, B. Miller.**

Loco United: N. Murphy, G. Kelly, A. Design (sub: J. Hart),
S. Zeman, I. Rodger, L. Stans, S. Rice, S. O'Brien, L. Boyce, G.
Hall, A. Yehuda (sub: R. Wallace, 80min), R. McLean.
Booked: McLean.
Referee: G. Poll.

Yesterdays

ARSENAL (0) 0 WIMBLEDON (1) 1
17:30
Arsenal: J. Lukic, J. Diaz, N. Winkler, P. Vieira, S. Roche,
S. Merson (sub: S. Merson, 45min), J. Wright, P. Moran, D. Bergkamp, R.
Parreira (sub: S. Higginson, 45min), R. Gauci (sub: S. Shearer),
D. Beasant, D. Venables.

WORCESTER (N. Salter, K. Cunningham, A. Kimble, V. Jones
(sub: P. Fox, 18min), R. Gittins, E. Elstou, M. Doyle (sub: D.
Holdsworth, R. Murphy), C. Parry, N. Astley).

TENNENTS SCOTTISH CUP: Fourth-round replay: Dundee
United v Hebei.

FA CUP: Fifth round: Derby v Coventry (7:45). Fifth-round
replay: Chester v Leicester (7:45).

COCA-COLA CUP: Semi-final first leg: Stockport v Middle-
brough (8:45).

FLYING PREMIERSHIP: Southampton v Wimbledon.

POSTCODE LOTTERY: Northern section: Semi-final:

NATIONWIDE LEAGUE: First division: Shrewsbury v Birmingham
(7:45); Wigan v Darlington (7:45).

ATLANTA UNITED: Postponed: Manchester United v Middlesbrough.

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FOOTBALL

Vale give Francis cause to rue lost time

Birmingham City 1
Port Vale 2

By RICHARD HOBSON

NEVER go back, Trevor Francis, the Birmingham City manager, must have pondered the wisdom of the adage during this Nationwide League first division match yesterday, having watched his side lose for the fifth time in succession and for the first occasion at home to Port Vale this century.

They were boozed off the pitch by the lowest crowd of the season at St Andrews, 13,192. The reaction might have been more favourable had Paul Mussenwhite, the Port Vale goalkeeper, not produced a marvellous double save from Paul Furlong and Nicky Forster close to full-time. Yet Birmingham were too indecisive at the back, rushed everywhere else and so

of the market and will help to turn us into possibly the best team in the league," Francis wrote in his programme notes.

After the game he was less sanguine. "I do not know how a side with the players we have can lose at home to Port Vale," he said. "There are four or five players in this team who I cannot recognise from a month ago."

Francis has pledged to buy 40,000 of the 150 shares and Steve Bruce, his captain, \$3,000. Bruce implored his side to greater efforts yesterday but his complexion had turned pink with rage by the time he headed against a post in the 79th minute.

This time last year he was involved at a club chasing the FA Cup and FA Caring Premiership double; twelve months on he is trying to avoid relegation into the second division with a side knocked out of the Cup by Wrexham. Yet the early stages here augured well for the home side. Paul Devlin converted a penalty won through his own initiative in the eighth minute. Industrious and tricky, he stole a yard on Dean Glover to fall under the tackle and thumped the resulting kick beyond Mussenwhite.

That galvanised Vale, who drew level eight minutes later. Well though Andy Porter struck his shot, it steamed from an awful mistake in the Birmingham defence. Martin Grainger had time to clear cleanly but instead kicked straight to Porter, who re-spun mercilessly.

Birmingham exerted some pressure shortly before the interval, when Martin O'Connor and Kenny Brown went close, but the loss of Anders Limpar to a groin strain was to prove costly. Devlin moved out wide and became less effective.

The winning goal came eight minutes after the restart and again there was a question-mark about Grainger. Glover moved ahead of him and stooped to head in Steve Guppy's corner. Vale did not have another opportunity but they hung on to move up into ninth spot, two points away from the top spot.

BIRMINGHAM CITY (4-4-2): Bennett — K. Brown, S. Bruce, G. Abbott — M. Grainger, J. Brown, M. Johnson, M. O'Connor, M. Limpar, N. Forster, A. Limpar — S. Guppy, D. Glover, N. Forster, A. Porter, J. Bogie, S. Guppy (sub: M. Furlong, 79). Referee: R. Hobson.

PORT VALE (4-4-2): P. Mussenwhite — A. Hill, N. Aspin, D. Glover, D. Stokes — J. Smith, A. Porter, I. Bogie, S. Guppy (sub: S. Talbot, 79), N. Walker, T. A. Maylor (sub: M. Foyle, 81). Referee: R. Hobson.

obviously lacking in confidence.

The feeling that Francis could make a similar impact in management as he had as a precociously gifted player here through the Seventies has long since dissipated among the rank-and-file supporters and the following photographs framed on walls inside the ground of the youthful striker serve only to emphasise the decline of the club.

Eleven years have passed since Birmingham last played at the top flight, yet Francis believes that the prospects for the longer-term are encouraging. A flotation within the next fortnight will add a further £4 million to the £1 million he has to venture into the transfer market.

We have got the foundation of a very competitive side and I will be bringing in hopefully four or five players who, in my opinion, are from the top end

of the market and will help to turn us into possibly the best team in the league," Francis wrote in his programme notes.

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That galvanised Vale, who drew level eight minutes later. Well though Andy Porter struck his shot, it steamed from an awful mistake in the Birmingham defence. Martin Grainger had time to clear cleanly but instead kicked straight to Porter, who re-spun mercilessly.

Birmingham exerted some pressure shortly before the interval, when Martin O'Connor and Kenny Brown went close, but the loss of Anders Limpar to a groin strain was to prove costly. Devlin moved out wide and became less effective.

The winning goal came eight minutes after the restart and again there was a question-mark about Grainger. Glover moved ahead of him and stooped to head in Steve Guppy's corner. Vale did not have another opportunity but they hung on to move up into ninth spot, two points away from the top spot.

BIRMINGHAM CITY (4-4-2): Bennett — K. Brown, S. Bruce, G. Abbott — M. Grainger, J. Brown, M. Johnson, M. O'Connor, M. Limpar, N. Forster, A. Limpar — S. Guppy, D. Glover, N. Forster, A. Porter, J. Bogie, S. Guppy (sub: M. Furlong, 79). Referee: R. Hobson.

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The feeling that Francis could make a similar impact in management as he had as a precociously gifted player here through the Seventies has long since dissipated among the rank-and-file supporters and the following photographs framed on walls inside the ground of the youthful striker serve only to emphasise the decline of the club.

Eleven years have passed since Birmingham last played at the top flight, yet Francis believes that the prospects for the longer-term are encouraging. A flotation within the next fortnight will add a further £4 million to the £1 million he has to venture into the transfer market.

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RACING

Sheikh voices unease over prize-money

BY JULIAN MUSCAT

BRITAIN'S poor prize-money was attacked by one of racing's staunchest supporters when Sheikh Hamdan Al-Maktoum, deputy ruler of Dubai and three times the leading owner, warned that the rewards neither encourage nor justify further bloodstock investment in this country.

In a message with serious implications for Flat racing, the sheikh called on bookmakers and the sport's administrators to address the issue. He questioned why bookmakers did not invest more in the product, the profits from which have allowed them to diversify into other business ventures. And he is frustrated at the cost of financing his extensive racing interests despite two decades of success on the racetrack.

The sheikh, a brother of Sheikh Mohammed, the world's largest and most successful owner/breeder, said: "We were first attracted by the traditions of British racing — plus the fact that English as a language is familiar. But you cannot go on investing all the time. Owning and breeding racehorses costs a great deal of money. No one can rely on the sport to make big profits, but you should certainly be able to hope to cover your expenses."

He indicated that the financial impasse should be resolved without further assistance from Westminster. "You cannot keep going back to the Government for more support," he told *Gulf Today*, a newspaper circulated in Dubai.

"We see prize-money stagnating while basic costs — such as training fees, transportation and veterinary bills — are all rising. The difficulties are plain to see. From my point of view, I feel the

solution has to come from within the sport, between administrators and bookmakers."

Britain, which offered £36 million in Flat prize-money last year, has the lowest reward-to-cost ratio among major racing nations. Unlike its competitors, Britain does not operate an off-course pool betting monopoly. The British Horseracing Board (BHB) sought to increase prize-money levels last year when lobbying for a reduction in General Betting Duty. But the Chancellor offered no respite in his November Budget, prompting some owners to criticise BHB's policy of cooperation with bookmakers.

The sheikh's comments add weight to that argument.

Tristram Ricketts, chief executive of the BHB, last night echoed some of Sheikh Hamdan's frustrations. "We share his concerns," Ricketts said. "We have achieved steady increases, but unless the government can be persuaded to act, we cannot make a quantum leap in that direction."

Sheikh Hamdan owns the Shadwell Estate in Norfolk, where his bloodstock holdings are based. Twice successful in the Derby, with Nashwan in 1989 and Erhab in five years later, he has never publicly expressed opinions on British racing's finances.

The Maktoum family has become more prudent in its bloodstock operations. Last year it secured a presence on the Racehorse Owners' Association council and installed John Gosden, the Newmarket trainer, to monitor events on behalf. Sheikh Hamdan's representations will add fresh urgency to the prize-money debate.

However complete Dunwoody's recovery, his injury could hardly have come at a worse time demand for his services at Cheltenham is at a

Dunwoody hurt by reaction to fall

BY JULIAN MUSCAT

RICHARD DUNWOODY, the former champion jockey, yesterday criticised racecourse medical procedures as he recovered from an injury which threatens his riding at the Cheltenham Festival. Dunwoody was upset at the time it took him to receive professional medical attention after a fall from See More Business in the Racing Post Chase at Kempton on Saturday.

Dunwoody, 33, is in the intensive care unit of Ashford Hospital after suffering a hairline fracture of the sternum, or breast-bone. He is hoping that he will be fit to return for the Festival which begins on March 11.

Dunwoody was unhappy that the first people on the scene did not seem to know the correct course of action.

Nap: STORMY CORAL
(4.10 Newcastle)
Next best: Love Me Do
(2.25 Southwell)

He ordered them away while he awaited other medical attendants. "The first person to attend tried to move me and caused a lot more pain. This is why I asked to be left alone," Dunwoody said. "I was disappointed about the length of time before receiving professional attention and I will be consulting with Michael Caulfield [of the Jockeys' Association] and Dr Michael Turner [the Jockey Club's medical adviser]."

Peter McNeile, Kempton's clerk of the course, said after the race that there had been telephone calls from Channel 4 viewers concerned about the length of time it took for Dunwoody to receive medical attention. "The ambulance crew tried to approach him three times and each time he told them to go away," McNeile said.

However complete Dunwoody's recovery, his injury could hardly have come at a worse time demand for his services at Cheltenham is at a



Mudahim, far side, duels with King Lucifer on his way to winning the Racing Post Chase at Kempton on Saturday

premium. The jockey would have spent the next 12 days schooling possible mounts in advance of the Festival. His book of Cheltenham rides is invariably one of the most attractive.

As Dunwoody suffered at Kempton, Adrian Maguire, who has missed the last two Festivals, underlined the strength of his own Cheltenham hand when riding five winners on the seven-race card. Before steering Viking Flagship through his prep for the Queen Mother Champion Chase, Maguire rode Sammarino to victory in the Dovecot Novices' Hurdle.

Sammarino is unbeaten in three outings over timber and the Champion Hurdle remains an option for Khaled Abdulla's home-bred, who was not entirely convincing

after he flattened the second-last hurdle. But the horse, travelling much the best at that stage, did no more than lose his concentration.

A sound surface would enhance his Champion Hurdle prospects, although David Nicholson, who trains the five-year-old, has deferred a decision for two weeks. Nicholson will be ably represented in the Triumph Hurdle by

Opera, whose debut victory in the Voice Newspaper Adonis Hurdle was convincing.

It was a fruitful afternoon for Nicholson. After Maguire and Pharaoar landed the stable, the trainer was adamant that his Escartefigue, who was hampered in finishing third, would win the Stayers' Hurdle at Cheltenham. But the Racing Post

clutches when his three runners filled the minor placings behind Mudahim, trained by Jenny Pitman. On a day of significant Grand National pointers, Mudahim was cut to 33-1 from 50-1 by Ladbrokes.

The shears were more severely deployed in the case of Suny Bay, who galloped away with the Greensills Grand National Trial at Haydock on Saturday. Trained by Charlie Brooks, the grey dropped to 16-1 from 25-1 for Aintree as Lo Stregone, among the market leaders, trailed home last of the five runners. His trainer, Tom Tate, is to have Lo Stregone blood-tested later this week after an inspection yesterday failed to account for his poor performance. He is now a 25-1 chance for the National.

Why must it be so? Why can't we put sectional interests on the back burner and concoct a dish with ingredients that blend into a delectation which will have the masses running to savour it?

After all, we have what I consider to be the most thrilling sport in the world. I did not fly to Atlanta last summer to see the Olympics; I shall not go to Wimbeldon this summer.

But I did drive to Ludlow on the Monday before Christmas in a highly nervous state, expectation fluttering like those scarves which football fans fly from car windows along motorways on Saturdays. And I did wedge myself, elbows braced, into a corner to stop my binoculars wobbling from adrenalin agitation. And when my Maid For Adventure came galloping home ten lengths clear of the field, I did hug and kiss her trainer Henrietta Knight and only just restrained myself from doing the same to her husband, Terry Biddlecombe, one of the great National Hunt jockeys.

From which you will gather that I am addicted. Totally and hopelessly. I started with jumpers who run when the ground is supposed to be soft, from October to April, and so found myself deprived of my addiction from May to September. Which was why I asked David Loder to buy me a horse we called Maid For Walking.

She took us to Royal Ascot and that year won more than all the Queen's horses put together. She is now cropping the blue grass of Kentucky and all her successors, horses which I have bought for the Flat and horses for the jumps, eat her winnings so fast that I will soon have to cut down and leave some of Mr Jackson's courses with even fewer runners.

Over the past few months there have been race meetings with six races and a total of 30 horses or fewer. The plain fact is that there is too much racing, too many courses and too many people taking too much out of the sport. There is the Government, which takes about £700 million in tax and VAT, seemingly oblivious of the fact that the British thoroughbred and our racing scene stand supreme in the world. Not for much longer, though, because we stand so low — just three of the bottom in the global prize-money league.

Then there are the bookmakers who take at least £250 million out of the sport every year. And finally the racecourses, who declare a profit of £8 million, a profit which could be much higher if they were well run and made full use of their land.

And what do we, the owners, take? Nothing financially, only our pleasure. For every £1,000 we put into racing we lose £780. We are mugs and we are being mugged. But for not much longer. We need to see change, massive change. Above all we need to see some strong leadership.

RACELINE
0930 1687
COMMENTARY
NEWCASTLE 101 201
PLUMPTON 102 202
SOUTHWELL 103 203
FULL RESULTS SERVICE 108

Developing strategy of courses for horses is essential

BY CHRIS BRASHER

LAST week this column was filled by Stanley Jackson, the managing director of the Racecourse Association (RCA). His job is to look after the interests of the 59 racecourses in Great Britain. They are courses for horses.

None of them would exist if it wasn't for the owners, trainers and jockeys who provide, train and ride the thoroughbred racehorse. The product which all 59 courses sell is the thrill of seeing thoroughbred compete against thoroughbred. So how many words did Mr Jackson devote to them, or to their owners, their trainers, their jockeys? Not one.

That is why I had to read his column again and again because to me it does not seem possible for any managing director to write about the state of his association or company, and about the state of his trade, without mentioning his product. But Mr Jackson achieved the impossible. And in so doing, he gave a clear message about the state of our sport: it is hopelessly divided.

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Paris show of loosen French com

NEWCASTLE

THUNDERER

2.10 NICHOLAS PLANT (rap) 3.40 Nigel's Lad
2.40 In A Moment 4.10 Stormy Coral
3.10 Colonel In Chief 4.40 Northern Squire

The Times Private Handicapper's top rating: 4.10 STORMY CORAL

GOING: GOOD TO SOFT TOTE JACKPOT MEETING SS

2.10 JOHN J STRAKER CHALLENGE TROPHY HANDICAP CHASE (£3,501; 2m 4f) (6 runners)

101 212/21- FORBIDDEN TIME 43 (F.G.B.) (M. Peacock) L Longe 9-11-10 R Sample 85
102 421/4- VILLAGE REINDEER 10 (D.F.S.) (J. Chester) P Coker 10-11-3 6 Gold 88
103 350/2- NICHOLAS PLANT 13 (D.O.F.S.) (M. Paterson) J Gidley 10-10-10 6 Gold 88
104 215/1- COLONEL IN CHIEF 13 (F.S.) (M. Paterson) P Kinsella 10-10-10 6 Gold 88
105 1- 144/9- POTATO MAN 10 (V.D.S.) (C. Foster) E. Elson 11-10-4 6 Gold 88

BETTING: 2-1 Furbelow True, 3-1 Nicholas Plant, 9-2 Grace-Harker, 5-1 Village Reindeer, 7-1 Solska, 8-1 Potatos Man.

NO COMPROMISING

FORM FOCUS

FORBIDDEN TIME beat Farmer's Head 4-1 in 5-lengths and Solska 5-1 in 5-lengths at Catterick on 11/11/96. Northern Squire beat Solska 4-1 in 5-lengths and Potato Man 4-1 in 5-lengths in handicaps at Newcastle on 20/11/96. Selective: NICHOLAS PLANT

2.40 GREAT NORTH ROAD SELLING HANDICAP (£2,057; 2m 1f) (18 runners)

101 205/1- PALACE OF GOLD 12 (C.O.F.S.) (M. Paterson) B Hall 12-0 ... 8 Week 7 88

102 433/4- LATIN LEADER 60 (D.O.F.S.) (J. Anderson) C Parker 11-11-4 6 Gold 88

103 212/1- STORMY CORAL 13 (D.O.F.S.) (J. Chester) P Coker 10-11-3 6 Gold 88

104 342/1- NICHOLAS PLANT 13 (D.O.F.S.) (M. Paterson) J Gidley 10-10-10 6 Gold 88

105 215/1- COLONEL IN CHIEF 13 (F.S.) (M. Paterson) P Kinsella 10-10-10 6 Gold 88

106 215/1- FARMER'S HEAD 13 (F.S.) (M. Paterson) P Kinsella 10-10-10 6 Gold 88

107 1- 144/9- PROMISE TO TRY 10 (M. Barnes) 5-10-7 6 Gold 88

108 212/1- THE GREAT TEAN 10 (M. Barnes) 5-10-8 6 Gold 88

109 343/5- OMEGA 10 (M. Barnes) 5-10-9 6 Gold 88

110 212/1- FIGHTING EAGLE 10 (M. Barnes) 5-10-10 6 Gold 88

111 212/1- CHARLIE 21 (D. Scott) W Corrington 7-10-9 6 Gold 88

112 212/1- PEGGY PEPPER 10 (M. Barnes) 5-10-11 6 Gold 88

113 212/1- COUGAR 10 (M. Barnes) 5-10-12 6 Gold 88

114 212/1- ROBBIE BOY 10 (M. Barnes) 5-10-13 6 Gold 88

115 212/1- FIGHTING FRED 10 (M. Barnes) 5-10-14 6 Gold 88

116 212/1- FIGHTING FRED 10 (M. Barnes) 5-10-15 6 Gold 88

117 212/1- FIGHTING FRED 10 (M. Barnes) 5-10-16 6 Gold 88

118 212/1- FIGHTING FRED 10 (M. Barnes) 5-10-17 6 Gold 88

119 212/1- FIGHTING FRED 10 (M. Barnes) 5-10-18 6 Gold 88

120 212/1- FIGHTING FRED 10 (M. Barnes) 5-10-19 6 Gold 88

121 212/1- FIGHTING FRED 10 (M. Barnes) 5-10-20 6 Gold 88

122 212/1- FIGHTING FRED 10 (M. Barnes) 5-10-21 6 Gold 88

123 212/1- FIGHTING FRED 10 (M. Barnes) 5-10-22 6 Gold 88

124 212/1- FIGHTING FRED 10 (M. Barnes) 5-10-23 6 Gold 88

125 212/1- FIGHTING FRED 10 (M. Barnes) 5-10-24 6 Gold 88

126 212/1- FIGHTING FRED 10 (M. Barnes) 5-10-25 6 Gold 88

127 212/1- FIGHTING FRED 10 (M. Barnes) 5-10-26 6 Gold 88

128 212/1- FIGHTING FRED 10 (M. Barnes) 5-10-27 6 Gold 88

129 212/1- FIGHTING FRED 10 (M. Barnes) 5-10-28 6 Gold 88

130 212/1- FIGHTING FRED 10 (M. Barnes) 5-10-29 6 Gold 88

131 212/1- FIGHTING FRED 10 (M. Barnes) 5-10-30 6 Gold 88

132 212/1- FIGHTING FRED 10 (M. Barnes) 5-10-31 6 Gold 88</p

breaking
ground
in water

ATHLETICS

Cross country

NAPLES: 1st, P. Kostyuk (Men) 30:00; 2nd, J. Khor (Ken) 35:00; 4th, S. P. Tchernov 35:23; 5th, K. Kosyay (Ken) 35:23; 7th, J. Chirikov (Ken) 35:30; 10th, S. Baranov (Ken) 37:45; 11th, J. Chirikov (Ken) 37:45; 14th, F. Bessonov (Ken) 29:05; 15th, E. Klyuchko (Ken) 28:45; 17th, B. Besharov (Bashk) 40:00; 19th, S. Burdach (Stourm) 39:45; 20th, S. D. Payne (Texas) 31:07; Team: Tipton 31:07.

COLOGNE: 1st, German League, First division: 13, G. Strobl (Germany) 27:51; 3, D. Mestel (Belgium) 27:50; Team:

DEEPCUT, Surrey: Inter-Services championships: Men, 1st, Col M Flint (RAF) 35:00; 2nd, Capt A. Arand (Army) 35:00; 3rd, Col M. Cross (RAF) 35:00; Team: Army, Women: 1st, Capt H. Hulme (RAF) 37:07; 2nd, S. M. Morris (Army) 37:06; 3rd, S. Sharp (Army) 25:01; Team: Army

Road running

SEVILLE: Spain: International marathon: Men: 1st, A. Rodriguez (Spain) 2:16:45; 2nd, J. Mutis (Ken) 2:18:47; 3rd, J. Lopez (Ken) 2:19:30; Women: 1, A. Koscheva (Russia) 2:41:00; 2nd, R. Burchell (Bath) 2:41:00; 3rd, S. Burdach (Stourm) 39:45; 4th, S. D. Payne (Texas) 31:07.

INDIANAPOLIS: USA: Marathon: 1st, C. M. Cross (RAF) 2:41:00; 2nd, S. Burdach (Stourm) 39:45; 3rd, S. D. Payne (Texas) 31:07.

BIRMINGHAM: Birmingham and District League: 1st, S. Burdach (Stourm) 39:45; 2nd, S. Besharov (Bashk) 40:00; 3rd, S. Baranov (Ken) 37:45; 4th, J. Chirikov (Ken) 37:45; 5th, F. Bessonov (Ken) 29:05; 6th, E. Klyuchko (Ken) 28:45; 7th, B. Besharov (Bashk) 40:00; 8th, S. Burdach (Stourm) 39:45; 9th, S. D. Payne (Texas) 31:07.

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BASKETBALL

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION (NBA), Florida: Charlotte 114 LA Clippers 102; New Jersey 94 Miami 88; 2nd, Denver 88; Portland 114 Miami 104; 3rd, Golden 82; Chicago 107; 4th, Atlanta 92; Sacramento 98; Minnesota 82; Phoenix 92; Orlando 92; 5th, Boston 98; Atlanta 92; 6th, Milwaukee 92; 7th, Washington 98; 8th, Dallas 92; 9th, Denver 92; 10th, Orlando 92; 11th, Atlanta 92; 12th, Boston 92; 13th, Milwaukee 92; 14th, Sacramento 92; 15th, Dallas 92; 16th, Atlanta 92; 17th, Boston 92; 18th, Sacramento 92; 19th, Atlanta 92; 20th, Boston 92; 21st, Milwaukee 92; 22nd, Atlanta 92; 23rd, Boston 92; 24th, Sacramento 92; 25th, Atlanta 92; 26th, Boston 92; 27th, Milwaukee 92; 28th, Atlanta 92; 29th, Boston 92; 30th, Milwaukee 92; 31st, Atlanta 92; 32nd, Boston 92; 33rd, Milwaukee 92; 34th, Atlanta 92; 35th, Boston 92; 36th, Milwaukee 92; 37th, Atlanta 92; 38th, Boston 92; 39th, Milwaukee 92; 40th, Atlanta 92; 41st, Boston 92; 42nd, Milwaukee 92; 43rd, Atlanta 92; 44th, Boston 92; 45th, Milwaukee 92; 46th, Atlanta 92; 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It takes peculiar stamina to get to the top in business — and to run a marathon. John Goodbody reports

Business secrets of staying the course

SIMON WALKER

Two long-distance executives talk about what makes them run — and how their jobs prepare them for the rigours of marathon training

Self-discipline and planning are necessary in many areas of life. These skills can be equally applied to work, hobbies and family duties. Athletes who complete the Flora London Marathon are often also prominent in their jobs.

The requirements are similar: concentrated effort, leaving nothing to chance and careful preparation. If the maxim is true that you should give a busy man a job to do, so high-flying executives are often the best people to take on the task of finishing a marathon.

They may not be able to devote as many hours to training as some athletes can, but they know how to arrange their lives to compress the maximum amount of exercise into the shortest possible time. They anticipate problems, smile on adversity and are never deflected from their task. They fulfil their potential.

Two outstanding examples are Niall FitzGerald, the chairman of Unilever plc, one of the world's largest consumer goods enterprises, and David Svendsen, the managing director of Microsoft, the leading software company. Here are two businessmen, both in highly competitive sectors, who know how to succeed.

The pair are curiously alike. Both are 6ft tall and weigh 12½ stone. Both have run one previous marathon and their best times are separated by only four minutes. They are only three years apart in age. They were both born abroad, and have lived extensively outside the United Kingdom, but are now based here. They are raising money for similar organisations: FitzGerald for the Save the Children Fund and Svendsen for the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children.

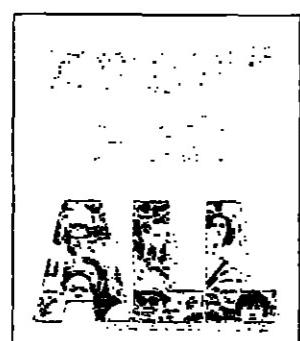
Svendsen does not see the similar choice of charity as odd. "I believe it makes sense. We are both in businesses which are focused on the next generation."

FitzGerald, 51, was born in Ireland and played a lot of rugby, football and cricket as a youngster but took up running only in the early 1980s when he was working for Unilever in South Africa.

"It was very popular there," he says. "The Comrades Marathon actually went past my front door." He began running up to five times a week. At the age of 36, he ran a marathon in 3 hours 31 minutes.

In March 1985, he returned to London to become group treasurer of Unilever but the pressures of work meant that he became a "weekend runner". Why did he start running more regularly? "Well, turning 50 had something to do with it. You have to prove yourself to do various things."

He accepts that he is "fairly pressurised" through his work and also



has to travel a great deal. "If you are not careful, you can get out of condition pretty quickly."

Often he now gets up at 6am to train and when he is abroad will always stay in hotels where there is a gym. He takes his running shoes whenever he goes and will often train on the streets. "It is a fun way to look round the cities."

The London Marathon has given him an extra incentive because since last year it has been sponsored by Flora, one of Unilever's brands. However, he is certainly not expecting to duplicate his previous marathon performance. "I would be happy to get round this time."

He goes through his work schedule weeks in advance to decide when he can get in his training sessions and, when he is in London, is often training four to five times a week. There will be a 40-55 minute run, followed by 25 minutes of strengthening work in a gymnasium. On other days, he will do shorter runs but, during the weekend, he will complete up to 12 miles. Before the marathon, he is planning to get in about 15 miles.

"You should not run unless you enjoy it, or at least convince yourself you are enjoying it. Certainly I like the whole process. I like the sense of freedom. It clears my mind. It helps me to find solutions to things at work, even if I have forgotten what those solutions are when I have finished.

"I saw the event on television last year. It is very emotional. There will be some nervousness about what happens on the day but I will finish, if I have to crawl in."

Svendsen, 48, has always used running as a "non-serious sporting pastime", initially during a rowing career in which he represented Queensland, in Australia, where he was born and raised.

He suffered from heart palpitations as an oarsman. "I used to stop breathing throughout a race. It was only when I took up distance running that I understood how to breathe properly. I have thought of taking up rowing again but I thought it would be a retrograde step."

It was when he was working in Australia in the 1980s that he got "seriously bitten by the running bug". He participated in the 14km Sydney to Bondi Beach race, in which up to 30,000 people take part, and this acted as an inspiration.

He came back to Britain in 1988 but had to concentrate on work at Microsoft. "It was a small, troubled business." However, he recently returned to serious running and recommends cross-training — practising different activities. "You can become very inflexible just running. But what is super-important for completing a marathon is the weekly long run. I am doing three hours on four successive



Turning 50, you have to prove things to yourself'

Sundays from the middle of February." This will be his second marathon. His first was in Athens last autumn, the centenary of first modern Olympic Games. He did three hours 27 minutes.

"We finished the race in the stadium that was used for the 1896 Games. It uplifted our spirits."

His spirits were so uplifted that, after the London Marathon, he has his eyes on Chicago in the autumn.

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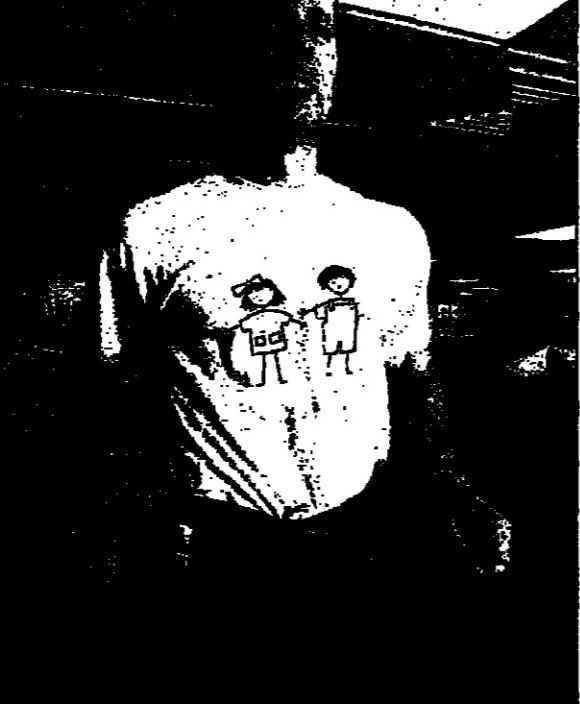
able to run 26 miles either in safety or with enjoyment. You should withdraw. Don't forget the organisers make a place automatically available for next year for those who pull out because they are either sick, lame or lazy.

This has become a particular problem in recent years because so many of the entrants are raising money for a charity and don't want to lose face. I understand there is a moral dilemma here but runners should not risk their own health.

"During the race, take water regularly, even in the first half when you may not feel like it. Last year, it was unusually hot and the faster runners began pouring bottles of water over themselves. Please do not do this. By all means use your own allocation to drink but don't take extra containers just for the temporary relief of splashing it over yourself. Others behind you have a great need of the water for drinking.

"Do not drink alcohol on the night before long runs and particularly before the marathon itself. Alcohol is dehydrating. A pint of beer produces more than a pint of urine and you should start a long run well hydrated.

"Finally, if you have any serious medical condition, we are happy for you to take part, but only with your doctor's agreement. Please let me know the details and the treatment you are having. Send them to me, quoting your running number when you know it. Address the envelope to me, mark it confidential and send it to the Flora London Marathon office, PO Box 1234, London SE1 8RZ."



'During the race, take water regularly, even in the first half'

Care pays in the long run

JULIAN HERBERT

The impact on the body of long-distance running should not be underestimated, Dr Dan Tunstall Pedoe, the medical director of the Flora London Marathon, says.

The keynote is to be careful and sensible in both training and on the day of the race.

"At the moment there is a flu bug going round. If you catch the bug, a feverish cold or tummy problem, you should not run until you have fully recovered. People always believe they are fit as they were before they became ill. They are not. So build up the mileage again gradually. Training too hard, too soon, may cause further damage or illness.

"Make certain you get enough days of rest and alternate hard days with gentle or non-active days. Do as much training as you can on soft surfaces, such as parkland or canal towpaths, rather than tarmac. If you have to do your long runs on roads, be careful that you vary on which side of the camber you run. Otherwise you will risk picking up an injury by putting a greater strain on one side of the body."

"Muscular aches and pains occur most frequently after a rise in mileage, so increase the training gradually. It is important to stretch your legs. However, you can do this after training rather than before if you have plenty of time, then by all means stretch before your session, but if you have only 20 minutes for an outing, there is not much point in spending ten minutes warming up. Instead, start running slowly and gradually loosen yourself into the session."

"If you do get so badly injured that

you cannot run, then you should see a doctor. However, most GPs are not very good at soft-tissue injuries, so you should find out who is the best qualified person available: a doctor with a particular interest in soft tissues or a physiotherapist.

"If you have not completed a 15-mile outing comfortably with a month to go before the marathon, you will not be

able to run 26 miles either in safety or with enjoyment. You should withdraw. Don't forget the organisers make a place automatically available for next year for those who pull out because they are either sick, lame or lazy.

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SHEEHAN on BRIDGE

BY ROBERT SHEEHAN, BRIDGE CORRESPONDENT

A 1 NT opening defines the opener's hand to within a narrow range of strength and distribution. So after opening 1 NT you should leave further action to your partner. Andrew Robson violated that sacred principle to great effect on this hand from the 1997 Macallan International Pairs.

Dealer South East-West game IMPs

	S	W	N	E	
1 NT	Pass	Pass	Pass	2D	
2K	Double	Pass	Pass	2S	
3C	Pass	4H	All Pass		
4J754	+A92	+KQ83			
VJ87	+K65	V32			
+Q54	+J1087	+AJ1087			
+K53	+106	+72			
	+AQ104				
	+K2				
	+AQ984				

Contract: Four Hearts by South; Lead: four of spades

1 NT showed 14-16 points. Robson couldn't open One Club as he would be in difficulties over a One Spade response — a rebid of 1 NT would show only 11-13 points. East's Two Diamonds showed diamonds and a major, and now someone who held old-fashioned views about the duties of the No-trump opener would remain silent on the South hand. However, Robson decided to show his own major. West's double was to defend Two Hearts only if that were East's suit. Over East's Two Spades Robson showed the last feature of his hand.

When the hand appeared on VuGraph, and the principles of, let us say, "traditional" No-trump opening theory were discussed, David Burn explained Robson's hyper-modern treatment: "First you open 1 NT to show your point count, then you bid your canapé suit, and finally you show your length."

Robson had given an accurate picture. Forrester (North) could tell that South must be 2-4-2-5, with strength concentrated in his long suits. When I bid as Robson did, West sits over me with KJ x x in both my suits.

□ Robert Sheehan writes on bridge Monday to Friday in Sport and in the Weekend section on Saturday.

KEENE on CHESS

BY RAYMOND KEENE, CHESS CORRESPONDENT

Cardiff masters

Three players made international master results at the Cardiff masters tournament, the first international master tournament ever held in South Wales. The players were James Cobb (who won the tournament with 6½ points out of nine), Daniel Gormally and Luke McShane. McShane, 13, needs just one more such result to be awarded the full master title.

Polgar's setback

Judit Polgar started off well in the Linares super-tournament and for the early part of the event she held the lead. Nevertheless, she met her nemesis in playing Black against Kasparov and never recovered from an inferior opening. After this game, Kasparov sped on to win the tournament. Polgar finished in a highly respectable fifth.

White: Garry Kasparov
Black: Judit Polgar
Linares, February 1997

Sicilian Defense

1 e4	c5	atx5
2 Nf3	a6	axc5
3 d4	cxd4	Rxa5
4 Nc3	Nc6	Rxa5
5 Bb5	Qd7	Bb5
6 Bxc6	a5	Rxa5
7 0-0	Nb6	Rxa5
8 Bb5	b6	Rxa5
9 Nf4	b5	Rxa5
10 g3	Be7	Rxa5
11 c4	d6	Rxa5
12 f3	Be7	Rxa5
13 Re1	0-0	Rxa5
14 Nc5	Be8	Rxa5
15 Nb6	Rd8	Rxa5
16 b4	Cb6	Rxa5
17 b5	Be8	Rxa5
18 a4	Nc7	Rxa5
19 Nc7	Re7	Rxa5
20 Cb3	Qc7	Rxa5
21 Rfc1	Rab8	Rxa5
22 Bd4	Rab8	Rxa5

Diagram of final position



London v Beijing

From tomorrow until March 2 grandmasters Chris Ward, Neil McDonald and Keith Aebersold, representing London, will take on a team of Chinese grandmasters from Beijing. Wang Zhenjie, Jiangchuan and Peng Xianyu. The venue is the London College of Traditional Acupuncture and Oriental Medicine, Finchley, London, from 1pm to 6pm. Spectators to this unusual event are welcome. For further details, contact the organisers on 0181-202 0982.

□ Raymond Keene writes on chess Monday to Friday in Sport and in the Weekend section on Saturday.

By Philip Howard

ORF

PIZE-BALL

- a. A female troll
- b. A sheep disease
- c. A goldfish

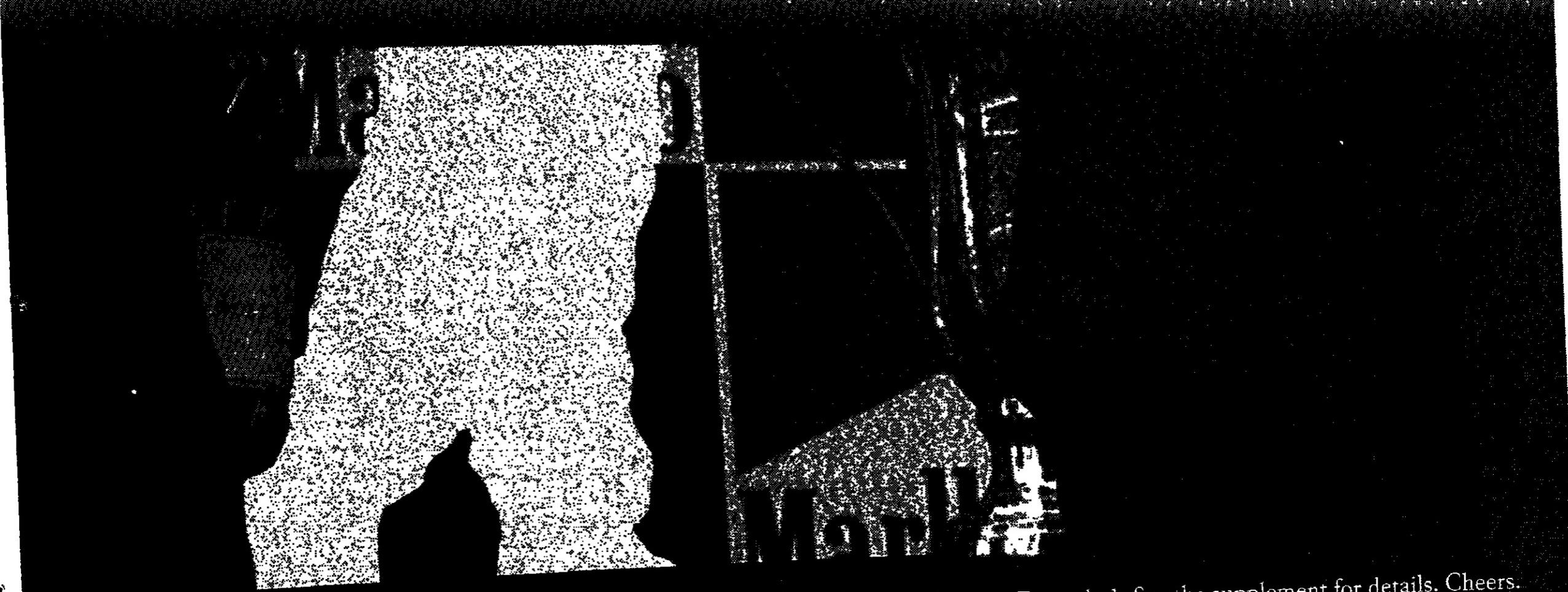
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THE TIMES MONDAY FEBRUARY 24 1997

THE TIMES

Guscott's
touch of
true class
puts paid
to Bristol



It could be. If you want to run your own championship team and win £25,000 play Fantasy Formula 1. See the supplement for details. Cheers.

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CHANGING TIMES

ما الذي من الأفضل

Law Report February 24 1997 Queen's Bench Divisional Court

Home Secretary entitled to find France safe for refugees

Regina v Secretary of State for the Home Department and Another, Ex parte Canbola

Before Lord Bingham of Cornhill, Lord Chief Justice and Mr Justice Moses

Judgment February 14

Responsibility for deciding whether a third country was safe for the purposes of section 2 of the Asylum and Immigration Act 1996 was entrusted to the Home Secretary. The role of the court was that of review, not appeal, and accordingly subject to the limitations applicable to judicial review.

Where, therefore, the Home Secretary had obtained information demonstrating the existence of French asylum law and procedure giving effect to France's international obligations and had received assurances from the French authorities as to the availability to asylum seekers of those measures, it was entitled to form the opinion that, contrary to the views of special adjudicators, a particular case of serious breach of the procedures did not establish a real risk that the officials systematically acted in breach of French law to frustrate asylum applications.

Accordingly, he was entitled to regard that case as isolated and France as a country to which he might authorise an asylum seeker's removal under the 1996 Act.

The Queen's Bench Divisional Court so stated, dismissing Giulay Canbola's application for judicial review of the decisions of:

I The Home Secretary issuing a certificate under section 2 of the Asylum and Immigration Act 1996 which authorised her removal from the United Kingdom to France as a third safe country for investigation of her claim for asylum under the Convention and Protocol Relating to the Status of Refugees (1951) (Cmnd 917) and (1967) (Cmnd 906)

2 The immigration officer refusing her leave to enter and removing her from the United Kingdom to France.

The applicant, a citizen of Turkey of Kurdish origin, arrived from Paris at Waterloo Inter-

national Station on August 31, 1996 claiming political asylum. On September 1, the Home Secretary issued a certificate under section 2 of the 1996 Act, which came into force that day, authorising her removal to France.

Section 2(1)(a) of the 1996 Act enabled the Home Secretary to direct the removal of an asylum applicant if he had certified that, in his opinion, the conditions in section 2(2) were fulfilled.

Section 2 provides: "(2) The conditions are— (a) that the person is not a national or a citizen of the country... to which he is to be sent; (b) that his life and liberty would not be threatened in that country...; (c) that a Convention reason...; (d) that the government of that country... would not send him to another country... otherwise than in accordance with the Convention..."

Mr Manjit Gill and Mr Asoka Dias for the applicant; Mr David Pannick, QC and Mr Mark Staw for the Home Secretary.

THE LORD CHIEF JUSTICE, giving the judgment of the court, referred to article 33 of the 1951 Geneva Convention, and to the Asylum and Immigration Appeals Act 1993 which had provided that nothing in the immigration rules should lay down any practice contrary to it but which enabled the secretary of state to direct an asylum applicant's removal to a third safe country, subject to appeal to a special adjudicator before any such removal took place.

That procedure was thought by government to be unsatisfactory since the inevitable delay while the appeal was decided might prejudice the willingness of the third country to receive the applicant.

Sections 2 and 3 of the 1996 Act had been enacted to overcome that perceived disadvantage. Their effect was clear. Where the secretary of state certified under section 2(1)(a) that, in his opinion, the conditions in subsection (2) were fulfilled, the applicant might be removed to a third safe country for any right of appeal, while they remained in the country.

The applicant was entitled to appeal on the ground that the conditions were not, or had ceased to be fulfilled but if the third country were either a member state of the European Union or a country designated by the secretary of state under the Act any appeal had to be pursued after the applicant had left the United Kingdom.

France was of course a member state of the EU; the applicant did not dispute that the conditions in section 2(2)(a) and (b) were fulfilled but challenged the lawfulness of the secretary of state's certificate on the ground that the condition in section 2(2)(c) was not met.

Turning to the main ground of challenge that the decision was irrational, his Lordship examined the task of the secretary of state to whom, as was clear under section 2 of the 1996 Act, the responsibility of deciding whether a third country was safe had been entrusted.

It was he who had to form an opinion, and if so advised, certify, and who had to be satisfied as to the criteria for such removal under *Statement of Changes to Immigration Rules* (HC 395, paragraph 345). There could be no doubt but that he and no one else was the decision-maker.

The role of the court was one of review not appeal, and as such it was subject to the ordinary limitations of judicial review. But as the consequences of an aberrant decision were potentially grave so the scrutiny by the court had to be rigorous: see *R v Secretary of State for the Home Department, Ex parte Bagauda* ([1987] AC 514).

It was important that when asylum applicants sought leave to move for judicial review to challenge section 2(1) certificates that judges should bear well in mind the statutory scheme which Parliament had enacted.

That provided for an appeal on the merits to a special adjudicator whose role was not limited to one of review. It also deprived applicants challenging a certificate relating to the EU member state of any right of appeal, while they remained in the country.

The special treatment accorded to such member states plainly reflected a parliamentary belief that the secretary of state was likely to regard such countries as safe in Convention terms.

It was obvious that if leave to move for judicial review were to be at all readily granted, with the usual consequence that removal would be stayed until the application was determined, the statutory scheme would be circumvented and the statutory object of returning asylum applicants to third countries before delay gave those countries a reason for refusing them would be frustrated.

On the other hand, it was important that a remedy by way of judicial review should be available in appropriate cases.

If an asylum seeker were returned to a third country which the secretary of state believed mistakenly to be safe and was returned by that country to the country of origin where he was subject to persecution, the asylum seeker might suffer the very fate against which the Convention was intended to protect him and in such circumstances the statutory right of appeal might be of no practical value whatever.

To deny an effective legal remedy if there were reasonable grounds for apprehending such an outcome would fail to honour the spirit if not the letter of the Convention, would in all probability constitute a breach of article 6 of the European Convention on Human Rights (1953) (Cmnd 3069) and would be inconsistent with the rule of law.

All the judge could do was to scrutinise with the utmost care the grounds and material relied on by the secretary of state and the applicant in order to assess, necessarily provisionally at the leave stage, the strength of the challenge and the degree of danger to which the applicant might be subject if he were left to pursue his statutory right of appeal.

The secretary of state's opinion was based on:

1 France's commitment to international conventions and agree-

ments applying to asylum seekers;

2 An assessment of French laws and procedures;

3 Information from the director of Direction des Affaires Juridiques (DLPA) and from the British liaison officer in the Direction Centrale du Contrôle de l'Immigration et de la Lutte contre l'Emploi des Clandestins (DCCILEC) in relation to the practical implementation of French laws and procedures;

4 Lack of evidence to contradict his view.

In a number of international agreements France had re-stated its determination to guarantee adequate protection to refugees in accordance with the Geneva Convention.

From the recent resolutions and agreements to which his Lordship referred, it was clear that France demonstrated at least an intention to afford the protection it was obliged to provide under the Convention.

His Lordship referred to the relevant provisions of French domestic law which showed that an applicant had a right notwithstanding the refusal of an application in certain circumstances by the prefect, to claim asylum from l'Office Français de Protection des Réfugiés et des Apartheid, an autonomous body responsible for the determination of asylum claims.

The applicant's challenge of irrationality had relied on criticism of the way French domestic law was applied in practice by French officials within the prefecture.

The two main sources for such criticism were information collected by independent agencies acting for asylum seekers, in particular, the Refugee Legal Centre in London, the Amnesty International in France and Germany, and decisions of special adjudicators determining in-country appeal under the 1993 Act.

The hub of the complaints was that there had been a persistent history of officials ignoring asylum requests and seeking to remove complainants on the basis of a

failure to claim asylum when the applicant had previously been in France.

The relevant material merited careful scrutiny by the secretary of state and their Lordships had carefully considered all the substantial and lengthy material before them.

It was not for the court to reach any conclusion as to the accuracy of the allegations that France had been considered by a number of special adjudicators and did not themselves form the basis of any determination that France was not a safe country.

Turning to the applicants' reliance on decisions of special adjudicators under the 1993 Act in which they had concluded that they were not satisfied that France was a safe third country, his Lordship said that it was important to place those decisions in their appropriate legal context.

It was for special adjudicators, exercising a primary judgment, to determine afresh whether they were satisfied that France was a third safe country; moreover the onus was on the secretary of state to satisfy the adjudicator that France was not an unsafe country.

The court's jurisdiction was therefore to be distinguished. It was not for the court to form any primary judgment as to the safety of France, nor for the secretary of state to establish that France was not unsafe. It was for the applicant to satisfy the court that his opinion was irrational.

Since April 1996, adjudicators sought to obtain information and assurances from France. His Lordship referred to correspondence from the British liaison officer with DCCILEC and the director of DLPA, the latter referring to concerns about the availability of French procedures to asylum seekers.

In his letter, the director had enclosed instructions to officials within prefectures as to the exercise of the right to claim asylum in France, and had included a note referring to the rigorous recruitment, training and disciplinary procedures to which such officials

were subject.

The evidence did not establish that the Home Secretary's opinion was irrational. He was entitled to place reliance on the international obligations France had undertaken and to consider that country would comply with its own legal procedures for considering asylum claims.

The two principal sources for the Home Secretary's assessment of French law and procedure were *Universal Description of Asylum Procedures in States in Europe, North America and Australia* published by the Secretariat of the Inter-Governmental Consultations on Asylum, Refugees and Migration.

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Treatment of spent offences of licence applicants

Adamson v Waveney District Council

Before Mr Justice Sedley

Judgment January 24

In considering whether, exceptionally, to admit convictions spent under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 when deciding whether to grant a Hackney carriage licence, justices, or at first instance the local authority sub-committee, should first consider what issue the material might have relevance then should decide whether the convictions were sufficiently relevant and only then consider whether to grant the licence, taking account of the interests of both the applicant and the public.

Mr Justice Sedley so held in the Queen's Bench Division when refusing the appeal of Bernard Charles Adamson from the decision of Lowestoft Justices to uphold the refusal of Waveney District Council to grant a Hackney carriage licence to him.

Mr Justice Sedley said that the first did not more than ask whether the Act meant what it said and the second was "yes".

The second question was: "Whether there was in the instant case any proper basis for the receipt of any or all of the spent convictions of the applicant".

It might, however, be brought into line in the following way. Before justices the right course was for the local authority advocate to indicate what was the class of offence, the age of the offence and, perhaps, in broad terms, the apparent seriousness, gauged by penalty, of the offence shown by the record before him.

That was the best that could be done, without pre-empting the very decision that the justices had to take, to enable the justices to decide, having heard anything the applicant wished to say to the

contrary, whether to admit any spent convictions. They might decide that some but not all others in the list ought to be put before them.

Translating that back to the stage where the matter was before the local authority, it might very well be that the chief constable should correspondingly be invited to provide a covering letter giving the same broad indications, but no more, so that the committee could decide whether it needed to go into some or all of those offences, the existence of which had been indicated to them.

That indication would of course be relevant, but it should not be considered under any circumstances.

Once some or all of the spent convictions were admitted in evidence, either before the local authority committee or before justices, the right course was for the local authority advocate to indicate what was the class of offence, the age of the offence and, perhaps, in broad terms, the apparent seriousness, gauged by penalty, of the offence shown by the record before him.

That was the best that could be done, without pre-empting the very decision that the justices had to take, to enable the justices to decide, having heard anything the applicant wished to say to the

contrary, whether to admit any spent convictions. They might decide that some but not all others in the list ought to be put before them.

BAe profits will reach for the sky

BRITISH AEROSPACE: The City expects another impressive performance from BAE, where Sir Richard Evans is chief executive, when it unveils full-year figures on Wednesday. Recent progress has been reflected in the shares, which in the past year have taken off from 78p to touch a peak of almost £1.13.

A 26 per cent increase in operating profits during the first six months will have been exceeded in the second half. At the pre-tax level NatWest Securities is forecasting a rise of 33 per cent from £330 million to £440 million, while rival UBS predicts a 38 per cent climb to £455 million.

A growing defence orderbook will provide the main thrust to increased profitability, with cash revenues benefiting from the start of deliveries of Tornados to Saudi Arabia. Future profits growth will be underpinned by the development of the Eurofighter. On the civil aircraft side, losses continue to be reduced. NatWest is looking for a 25 per cent increase in the net dividend to 25 pence.

NATWEST BANK: All eyes will be on the performance of NatWest Markets when the parent bank reports on Tuesday. After the sharp fall in profit reported by BZW, the global investment banking arm of fellow clearing bank Barclays, analysts will be looking to see how the two compare.

SBC Warburg has pencilled in a pre-tax profit for the full year of £1.25 billion for NatWest, compared with £1.75 billion in 1995. Costs will include NatWest's branch closing programme, unveiled at the half-year, which will reduce the workforce by 10,000 over four years and which at the interim stage contributed towards the drop in group profits. The full-year figures will also include the £690 million loss on the disposal of Bancorp, its US retail and consumer banking operation, which the group sold last May.

ABBEY NATIONAL: The acquisitive instincts of Peter Birch, chief executive of Abbey National, which is expected to report annual pre-tax profits of around £1.2 billion, will be to the fore on Thursday. The bank's £1.4 billion bid for Scottish

Amicable will be tabled the following day and stacked up against those of the Prudential and possibly AMP, the Australian insurer. The deciding factor in the ScotAm bid could be the Scottish card so cannily played by the Abbey which already owns Scottish Mutual. The two headquarters are geographically close and the promise on job security, including those of the ScotAm directors, could win the day. Michael Forsyth, the Scottish Secretary, is taking a keen personal interest in the outcome.

PRUDENTIAL: Another Scottish Amicable suitor presents its full-year figures on Wednesday, which will include a final contribution from M&G, the reinsurer, sold in December. Estimates of operating pre-tax profits are £370-£380 million compared with £304 million.

Life profits are expected to be 16 per cent up on the previous year with much of the impetus coming from Jackson National, which should be sharply higher because of the recovery in new business and its increasing maturity. A 10 per cent increase in the payout to 17.2p is also on the cards.

STANDARD CHARTERED: No bank will follow developments in China after the death of Deng Xiaoping more closely than Standard Chartered, which reports on Wednesday. Last month Standard, expected to unveil annual pre-tax profits of between £855 million and £870 million, was one of only eight foreign banks, together with HSBC, to be granted a licence to trade in the Renminbi currency. The half-time profit of £448 million were flattered by the proceeds from the sale of the group's private banking arm. Provided the other countries in Standard's portfolio, such as India, Hong Kong, Malaysia, Singapore and certain African regions, produce no upsets, shareholders can expect a "solid" rise on last year's second-half dividend of 7.5p and a full-year payout of 11p.

BRITISH GAS: Thursday's full-year figures will be the last after the recent demerger of the business into two separate companies, BG Group and Centrica. To a large extent they are irrelevant although the group may take the opportunity to wipe the slate clean. Net income is expected to be virtually stagnant at around £907 million. But the group will tumble into the red after write-offs which some brokers estimate could be as much as £1.3 billion. The underlying performance is likely to be flat, although TransCo will have benefited from reduced costs. The company has already forecast a final dividend of 8.1p, making an unchanged 14.5p for the year.



Sir Richard Evans expects BAe's profits to be underpinned by the Eurofighter, despite US competition

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THORN: After last month's profits warning, there are unlikely to be many surprises when third-quarter figures are revealed this morning. Pre-tax profits will have grown 8 per cent from £113.5 million to £123 million, with brokers having pencilled in £170 million for the year. A first time dividend of 1.5p is expected for the full year.

EMI: A disappointing performance is expected from the other half of the Thorn EMI demerger.

Poor trading conditions in the music division will leave operating profits around £3 million lower at £213 million. Brokers say trading has been hit by currency factors, the depressed US retail market and a dual release schedule. A full-year £400 million has been pencilled in for the current year.

COMMERCIAL UNION: Currency fluctuations and bad weather are likely to have made a sharp dent in final-quarter profits and will have depressed the overall

results. Wednesday's full-year figures should show operating profits overall down from £509 million to £421 million. This will also affect the net asset value, which will have dropped from 882p to 722p-730p. A rising tax charge will see earnings fall, but the City is looking for the payout to be increased by 7 per cent to 30.25p.

GUARDIAN ROYAL EXCHANGE: Full-year figures tomorrow are likely to see a sharper fall than CU. Operating profits should have declined by around 27 per cent to £253 million. The market range is £240-£270 million, with restructuring costs taking their toll. US results will have been hit by poor weather, while Europe will have seen a further decline in underwriting profits.

GEORGE WIMPEY: Further evidence of a housing pick-up should be reflected in full-year figures tomorrow. Pre-tax profits are likely to have almost doubled to £30 million, with earnings growing from 1.6p to 5.3p. Brokers will want to know how Wimpey intends to increase land bank and if a buyer has been found for its Morrison Homes business in the US.

LASMO: A stronger oil price should provide the basis for a sharp recovery in profitability when full-year figures are published on Thursday. UBS is forecasting a leap of 585 per cent in net income to £103 million. Brokers will be anxious to discover what new projects are planned. An increase of 20 per cent in the payout to 1.2p is expected.

RITZ: The drop in copper and aluminium prices will make a sizeable dent in profitability when the group reports full-year figures on Thursday. During 1996 the copper price fell 22 per cent to 104 cents, while aluminium was 16 per cent down to 70 cents. Earnings are expected to be down around 15 per cent to 5671 million, although there may be a token increase in the payout to 27.5p. The continuing delay in start-up of the new Kennebunk sunbelt will provide a further drag on profits in the current year.

TODAY
Interline: Canadian Overseas Packaging, Community Hospitals, Gearhouse Group, Hanson (1), Pizza Express, Thom (2), Pilkington, Dixon Motors, Estates & General, Fitch, Hibbert Group, Royal Hotel Group, Skipton Building Society, Economic statistics: US Treasury January budget statement, US Treasury auction of short-term T-bills.

TOMORROW
Interline: Alumasc, EMI (nine month), Primadonna, Kilmorack High Income, Sama Group, William Sinclair Holdings, Finistic, Admiral, Capita Group, Coventry Building Society, Guardian Royal Exchange, Lymann Investment Property, National Bank, Newcastle Building Society, Scottish Television, Small Smaller Companies, Tropicana, George Wimpey. Economic statistics: none.

WEDNESDAY
Interline: Bellwinch, Logica, Pitco Holdings, Cuyle Munro, Renshaw Plastic Access Plus, Brewin Dolphin Holdings, British Aerospace, Citi Shopping Centres, Commercial Union, Chesterware, Dentsu Group, Family Group, Interwest, ISA International, Mayflower Corporation, Standard Chartered, Vardon, Zetefarms. Economic statistics: UK December global trade balance, UK February non-EU trade balance, Bank of England announces result of gilt auction, Bundesbank awards repos.

THURSDAY
Interline: Finlays, Abbey National, Barts Global Emerging Markets, British Gas, Burford Holdings, Green Property Company, Laing, Savills, Liberty Insurance Holdings, Morrisons, Novartis Group, RTZ Corporation, Stamford Rock Holdings. Economic statistics: Wimpey South by-election, Hans Tietmeyer, President of the Bundesbank, to speak at financial markets conference, Bank of France, US weekly claims report, US January durable goods, US January existing home sales.

FRIDAY
Interline: Elida, Finistic, Henty Group, Scotswood Industries, United Industries. Economic statistics: UK British Bankers Association January mortgage lending.

The Mail on Sunday: Buy Today, Epicore Networks, Hold Manx & Overseas. **The Sunday Telegraph:** Hold Shield Diagnostics, Stamford Rock, Buy Merchant Retail, London & Edinburgh Publishing, Cavendish, Allen, Golden Rose Communications, Zeneca. **The Sunday Times:** Buy British Telecom, Wimpey, Mayflower, LucasVarity, Community Hospitals, SEC, Hold Wembley, KIZ-CRA.

Crédit Lyonnais to get more aid

FROM LEVIA LINTON
IN BRUSSELS



Van Miert letter from DTI

JEAN ARTHUIS, the French Finance Minister, is set to announce this week up to Fr 30 billion of new state aid to Crédit Lyonnais, the French bank that has only recently returned to a small profit after several years of disastrous losses. The French Government is expected to approach the European Commission for approval of the restructuring aid.

However, Karel Van Miert, EU Commissioner for Competition, has yet to receive a communication from the French, according to his spokesman.

The Department of Trade and Industry is understood to have written to Mr Van Miert last month, supporting the Commission in its stance in questioning the need for state aid for Crédit Lyonnais, although a spokeswoman for the DTI refused to comment.

The new aid would come on top of an earlier package of state aid worth Fr45 billion, a sum which the Commission describes as "enormous" and only reluctantly approved in

Take the rollercoaster ride

Will the gilt market peak on election night? There are good reasons to believe that it might. This contrasts with the growing market optimism that gilts will rally in the second half of 1997, once the election is over and the impact of sterling's strength on the economy becomes apparent.

There is an election night effect. The past two elections have had a significant influence on gilt-market performance. In 1992 gilts sold off sharply in the month before the election, but reversed their losses in the immediate run-up to election day, in anticipation of the Conservatives' remarkable recovery.

The 1987 election also proved to be an important watershed and there are some especially interesting parallels with today. In 1987 economic growth was above trend, sterling was in one of its few strengthening phases and the election outcome looked fairly certain. Today growth is slower than ten years ago, sterling's progress is more pronounced and the election unlikely to result in any adverse policy changes.

In the six months before the 1987 election gilts rallied sharply, with yields falling 140 basis points. Although gilts will not match their 1987 performance, they are expected to do well in the coming weeks. After the election, a sharp sell-off as in 1987 is unlikely, but gilt yields are expected to drift higher.

Turning to the fundamentals, there are four main reasons for near-term optimism. First, UK underlying inflation, despite disappointing January figures, is likely to fall. Assuming a May 1 election, the two monthly retail price releases before then should see the annual underlying rate move

Government to achieve its target of underlying inflation of below 2.2 per cent by the end of this Parliament but, even so, it will help gilt market sentiment in the near term.

Secondly, fears of an early increase in base rates have eased, partly because of sterling's strength and the improved inflation outlook, but also because of mixed growth numbers. An additional and growing element behind the downward shift in interest rate expectations is the prospect of fiscal tightening from an in-

ten-year bonds — and look set to remain low for now.

There are longer-term negatives. By election night or thereabouts, all the buyers will have bought and investors may reconsider their existing post-election investment strategies.

All four points above could turn sour in the second half of 1997. Underlying inflation may reach 2.2 per cent, but will then move sideways or begin to edge higher. Fears of base-rate rises will re-emerge as growth proves firmer than expected, because of strong labour and housing markets and renewed growth in Europe. Labour's difficulties may begin to appear once in office of the Shadow Cabinet, only a handful have previous ministerial experience and none have held senior office. And finally, global bond yields, which account for half of all movements in gilt yields, will be rising by May 1 or certainly near their lows.

In conclusion, gilt investors should ride the rollercoaster for now, but prepare to exit before Labour's May Day election.

DICK HOWARD AND ADRIAN OWENS
Julius Baer Investments Limited

coming Labour government, which would lessen the urgency for any post-election base-rate rise.

Thirdly, the markets view a Labour victory positively, a remarkable achievement by the party's leaders. Policies such as a more positive attitude towards the single European currency, greater Bank of England independence and tight public spending targets are all gilt-edged.

Fourthly, global bond yields have fallen this year — by 10 basis points in the US and by 28 basis points in Germany on

Markets focus on Wirral South result

There are very few statistical releases in Britain this week and most of the market's attention is likely to fall on Thursday's by-election in Wirral South. Labour is expected to win and so consolidate its position as clear favourite to win the forthcoming election. It is, however, hard to see what impact this will have on markets, which are already well used to the idea of a Labour victory.

Another focus of interest could be tomorrow's speech by Eddie George, Governor of the Bank of England, to an international bond conference in London. Otherwise, the markets will be looking at Wednesday's trade figures.

December's global visible trade is expected to show a deficit of £1.1 billion compared with a shortfall of £959 million in November. Meanwhile January figures for non-European Union trade are expected according to the market consensus compiled by MMS International to show a deficit of £700 million

compared with December's trade gap of £844 million.

Otherwise, the main focus of the markets this week will be the two days of Humphrey Hawkins testimony by Alan Greenspan, Chairman of the US Federal Reserve. He testifies before the Senate Banking Committee on Wednesday and the House Banking subcommittee on Thursday. Mr Greenspan's remarks will be scrutinised closely for any hint of his leaning on US interest rate policy.

Adam Chester, international bond strategist at Yamaichi International Europe, said: "The benign nature of the recent inflation data has taken some of the heat out of the US policy debate, although the markets will be looking to Mr Greenspan for implicit confirmation that a rate rise in March (and May) is off the cards." He believes that Friday's second estimate of fourth-quarter US GDP should support the argument for unchanged rates.

JANET BUSH

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THE TIMES MONDAY FEBRUARY 24 1997

UK urged to use euro alongside the pound

By MARTIN WALLER

AN INNOVATORY plan from the Adam Smith Institute, the free market think-tank, suggests Britain should adopt a two-stage approach to economic monetary union by making the euro, the EU's planned super-currency, legal tender alongside the pound.

Madsen Pirie, president of the institute, in a paper published today, argues that if Britain is not as widely expected, in the first wave of countries joining a single currency, it could still see the benefit by adopting the euro as legal tender for all but the smallest transactions.

This would allow the euro to circulate freely through Britain and give business and citizens access to it. British firms would be able to trade in the currency, for example making and receiving payments through euro bank accounts, rather than being subject to the whims of the currency markets.

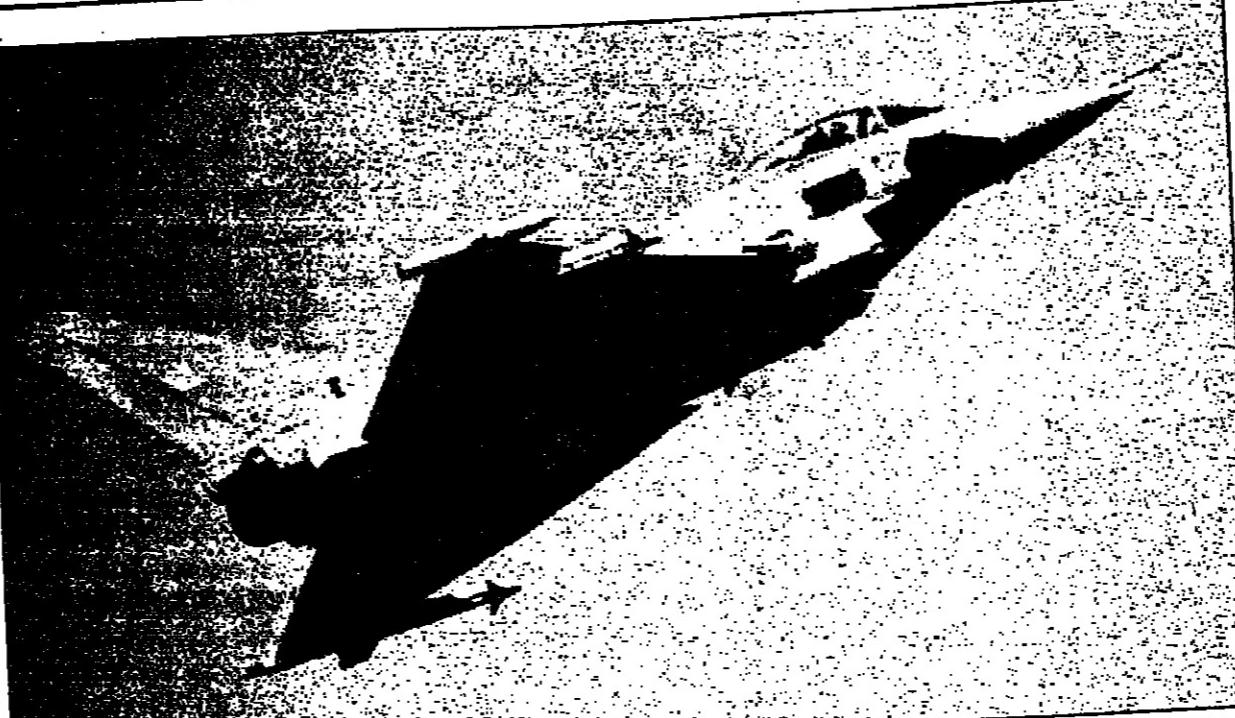
Dr Pirie concedes that his idea is similar to the "hard eu" proposed by Britain that was to have circulated alongside national currencies, except that other European nations were too far down the road to a single currency to be interested. "If the euro is indeed built upon the

sand of fudged criteria, it might well float down against the pound in the period after its launch," he writes. "The greatest advantage of all is that it would allow us to test the quality of the euro."

Conversely, if a future UK government were tempted to print money and fuel inflation to solve short-term problems, British citizens could seek refuge in the euro to protect their savings. "People would use the one they preferred, the one they trusted," Dr Pirie believes.

There are plenty of countries that accept two currencies on a *de facto* basis — sterling and the Irish pound are acceptable both sides of the border, the US dollar is almost as good as the Canadian one north of the 49th Parallel, in Hong Kong anything goes as long as it is money, and Russians prefer the greenback to the ruble.

Dr Pirie says: "From the Government's point of view, it has the attraction that it would probably unite the Conservative Party. And, as so often happens these days, it would surely be only a matter of time before new Labour announced that it, too, had accepted the new policy..."



If selected by the Norwegians, the Eurofighter will provide BAe and its partners with a contract worth £400 million

Oslo's sights on Eurofighter

By OLIVER AUGUST

BRITISH AEROSPACE is close to registering its biggest Eurofighter export success so far with a contract worth £400 million. Norway is the first country outside the four nations building the aircraft to put the multi-role fighter on a final selection list.

If the Eurofighter is selected this will be another boost for BAe, which is expected to report a 33 per cent increase in profits to £440 million on Wednesday. The Royal Norwegian Ministry of Defence committed itself to buying the Eurofighter or the American F16 for delivery in 2003. An estimated 40 aircraft will be purchased.

A spokesman for Dasa, the German Eurofighter partner, said the Norwegians' decision will trigger a breakthrough in export negotiations. These could bring billions of pounds to the European defence industry and would create up to 14,000 jobs in Britain.

He said: "This is of paramount importance for marketing efforts and will influence procurement decisions in other NATO countries and maybe the Middle East. There is a close link between Oslo and Copenhagen and this will encourage the Danes to get the Eurofighter."

The Norwegian decision is seen as vindication of the BAe

and Dasa strategy to stick to the Eurofighter through its many problems. The Rafale fighter France's answer to the Eurofighter, was deselected by the Norwegians.

BAe has argued that export sales will make the British Government's support for the project worthwhile. In return for the taxpayers' money spent on the Eurofighter, the Treasury stands to reap millions in tax revenue from exports.

Nevertheless, BAe's marketing strategy for the Eurofighter is being openly challenged by its American rival. The BAe case for the Eurofighter rests on the argument that its higher price

Computer Cabs on track for March 4 start

By FRASER NELSON

COMPUTER CABS has won its battle to join the Alternative Investment Market, with more than half of its 2,000 member drivers voting with their wallets and subscribing for shares.

The company, which operates London's largest network of black cabs, has named March 4 as its date for joining the junior exchange, after fending off three legal actions to thwart its flotation plans.

While a mass meeting of 800 cabbies supported the flotation in November, rebels who wanted free shares in return for the £3.5 million they paid towards a satellite tracking system tried to prevent the float. They claim that only a quarter of the drivers have been fitted with the system.

However, after a successful placing, Computer Cabs has now raised £4 million — enough to complete the £7.5 million needed for the complete satellite system.

VFG, the film and TV production company whose finance director is David Stamp, joins the market this week valued at £7 million. It has raised £3 million for new equipment. The Screen, which provides touchtone security control systems, plans to raise £2 million through a flotation next month.

Other companies hovering around the market include Q Group, which publishes economics and languages products. It is looking to raise £4 million to fund growth.

Avalon Oil, an oil explora-

tion company which has joined forces with Gazprom, is raising £35 million from a placing and should join AIM in three weeks' time.

The newcomers will join a market that is marooned at a near high, but has failed to break through its peak for the third week in succession. The FTSE AIM index, which surged by some 10 per cent over four weeks, gained by 12 points last week to close at 1,209.90.

While the calm owes a lot to the stability of AIM's giants, its penny shares have been helping to prop up the market with a minor resurgence.

The market value of Epic Multimedia, whose shares last month performed one of the most spectacular nosedives seen on the junior exchange, recovered by some 27 per cent last week, with a rise from 11p to 14p per share.



Stamp: VFG market launch

ALTERNATIVE INVESTMENT MARKET												P/E		
1996/97 High	1996/97 Low	MM cap (million)	Price per share	Wkly +/-	Ytd %	P/E	1996/97 High	1996/97 Low	MM cap (million)	Price per share	Wkly +/-	Ytd %	P/E	
110	107	11.90 AFA Systems	118.2	-	-4.1	11.4	104	4	5.33	1. Lewis Hard	21.4	+110	0.1	8.8
150	149	21.70 AMCO Corp	120.2	-	-7.0	20.7	105	3	9.94	2. Rapier Zn	120.5	+111	3.4	3.2
427	367	5.53 AMO Int'l Plc	100.0	-	-	20.7	105	2	8.73	3. Rapier Geog Svc	115	-5	3.2	5.2
107	114	1.62 Amoco Rec P/P	145.0	-	-2.9	19.7	105	1	8.12	4.1 Rapier Wts	115	-2	2.9	18.9
150	95	21.00 Amex Pier	100.0	-	-	19.7	105	2	8.45	5. Rapier Woods	115	-2	2.9	5.2
161	125	11.20 Amgen	100.0	-	-	19.7	105	1	8.69	6. Rapier Yer	115	-2	2.9	18.9
211	117	11.30 Amgen Gold	100.0	-	-	19.7	105	2	8.69	7. Rapier Yer	115	-2	2.9	18.9
117	65	14.50 Amgen Gold & Ed	100.0	-	-	19.7	105	1	8.69	8. Rapier Yer	115	-2	2.9	18.9
41	13	5.62 Amgen Gold & Ed	100.0	-	-	19.7	105	2	8.69	9. Rapier Yer	115	-2	2.9	18.9
24	29	1.85 Alpha Optik	100.0	-	-	19.7	105	1	8.69	10. Rapier Yer	115	-2	2.9	18.9
525	360	50.00 Ami Star Systems	100.0	-	-	19.7	105	2	8.69	11. Rapier Yer	115	-2	2.9	18.9
1065	865	55.10 Archer	100.0	-	-	19.7	105	1	8.69	12. Rapier Yer	115	-2	2.9	18.9
107	104	10.20 Archer	100.0	-	-	19.7	105	2	8.69	13. Rapier Yer	115	-2	2.9	18.9
117	7	17.80 Ardent	100.0	-	-	19.7	105	1	8.69	14. Rapier Yer	115	-2	2.9	18.9
115	29	29.90 Arkt Capital	100.0	-	-	19.7	105	2	8.69	15. Rapier Yer	115	-2	2.9	18.9
20	24	1.16 Arley Hand	100.0	-	-	19.7	105	1	8.69	16. Rapier Yer	115	-2	2.9	18.9
149	123	12.80 BAMK Art Services	100.0	-	-	19.7	105	2	8.69	17. Rapier Yer	115	-2	2.9	18.9
68	92	1.95 Bamco	100.0	-	-	19.7	105	1	8.69	18. Rapier Yer	115	-2	2.9	18.9
4	1	11.50 Bantam	100.0	-	-	19.7	105	2	8.69	19. Rapier Yer	115	-2	2.9	18.9
95	92	1.13 Barnebys	100.0	-	-	19.7	105	1	8.69	20. Rapier Yer	115	-2	2.9	18.9
75	70	1.04 Barnebys	100.0	-	-	19.7	105	2	8.69	21. Rapier Yer	115	-2	2.9	18.9
70	41	1.34 Barnebys	100.0	-	-	19.7	105	1	8.69	22. Rapier Yer	115	-2	2.9	18.9
105	75	1.42 Barnebys	100.0	-	-	19.7	105	2	8.69	23. Rapier Yer	115	-2	2.9	18.9
240	240	1.42 Barnebys	100.0	-	-	19.7	105	1	8.69	24. Rapier Yer	115	-2	2.9	18.9
157	116	17.60 CA Cache Ridge	100.0	-	-	19.7	105	2	8.69	25. Rapier Yer	115	-2	2.9	18.9
185	125	1.22 CCI Founder Sh	100.0	-	-	19.7	105	1	8.69	26. Rapier Yer	115	-2	2.9	18.9
119	116	1.20 CCI Hedges	100.0	-	-	19.7	105	2	8.69	27. Rapier Yer	115	-2	2.9	18.9
213	95	5.42 Ciba-Geigy	100.0	-	-	19.7	105	1	8.69	28. Rapier Yer	115	-2	2.9	18.9
75	24	2.55 Ciba-Geigy	100.0	-	-	19.7	105	2	8.69	29. Rapier Yer	115	-2	2.9	18.9
24	19	30.40 Ciba-Geigy	100.0	-	-	19.7	105	1	8.69	30. Rapier Yer	115	-2	2.9	18.9
108	85	3.01 Ciba-Geigy	100.0	-	-	19.7	105	2	8.69	31. Rapier Yer	115	-2	2.9	18.9
217	21	2.40 Ciba-Geigy	100.0	-	-	19.7	105	1	8.69	32. Rapier Yer</				

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THE TIMES MONDAY FEBRUARY 24 1997

BUSINESS NEWS 45

Disney 'fat cats' face shareholder protest after \$70m payoff

A CLAMPDOWN on American fat cats is set to follow a shareholder protest tomorrow about the size of the pay package for Michael Eisner, chairman of Walt Disney, and of other senior executives, due to take place at the company's annual meeting.

Progressive Asset Management, a Californian brokerage firm, has filed a resolution calling for a cap on future severance packages and salaries for top

executives. In a separate move, other leading institutional shareholders such as the California Public Employees Retirement System, the largest pension fund in the US, are expected to withhold their support for four executives who come up for re-election at the meeting as a sign of protest over pay packages. CalPERS has a policy of active intervention in companies over issues of corporate governance. The protest was fuelled by the \$70

million payoff for Michael Ovitz who recently left his job as Mr Eisner's deputy after only a year at Disney.

Mr Eisner himself is one of the highest-paid executives in the US, garnering several hundred million dollars in pay, bonuses and share options during his ten years as head of Disney. CalPERS is also considering joining a lawsuit brought against Disney by angry shareholders protesting at the size of Mr

Ovitz's deal. "There will be a lot of anger vented at the meeting", said Conrad MacKerron, director of social research at PAM. "We want to send a message to Disney to preserve its good name." The protest is part of the growing dispute in US business at the soaring levels of top executives' pay, which have far outstripped those of other workers in the past three years.

PAM is supported by shareholders who include the United Methodist Church, and by the Communications Workers of America, the main union at the ABC television network that Disney purchased last year. They are also objecting to low level of wages that they claim Disney pays to contract workers in developing countries such as Haiti. Many workers receive only 30 cents an hour, a third of what many other US companies pay, Mr MacKerron said.

The huge disparity between the

contract workers and the executives is unacceptable", he said.

PAM and its backers expect to get support from the 6 per cent of shareholders required to bring up the same issue at next year's meeting. Refusal to support the four directors coming up for re-election, however, is expected to extend to as many as 20 per cent of shareholders. "That would certainly be seen as an anti-Ovitz vote," said Mr MacKerron.



Eisner: highly paid

Engineers tone down stance on minimum wage law

By PHILIP BASSETT
INDUSTRIAL EDITOR

LEADERS of Britain's engineering industry are to make a significant about-turn over Labour's plans for a national minimum wage by pragmatically advising engineering companies on how best to deal with its introduction.

The move by the Engineering Employers' Federation stops short of abandoning opposition to a minimum wage, but will be seen by Labour as indicating industry's readiness, if necessary, to implement minimum pay and as a sign of business's belief of at least the strong possibility of Labour winning the coming election.

Previously, the EEF was completely opposed to Labour's plans to put a statutory floor under wages, but EEF leaders have now shifted to a more practical approach.

A similar shift by the EEF over the introduction in Britain of European-style works councils led to Conservative claims that such practical advice on operation of these consultative bodies was in effect giving support to them by abandoning opposition.

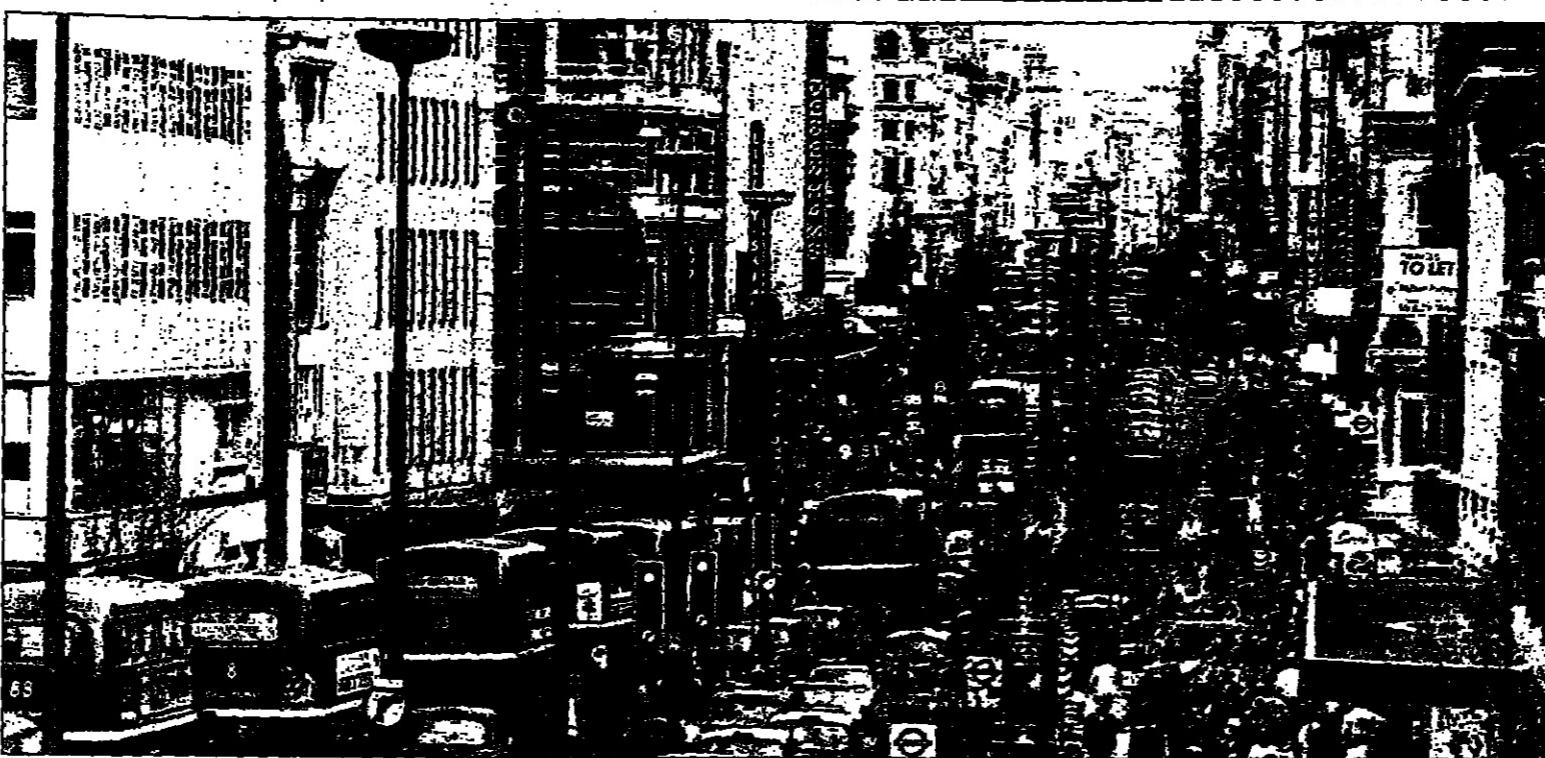
An unpublished EEF policy paper on minimum pay, seen by *The Times*, makes clear that engineering companies still do not support it, because of what they see as its inflationary effect on the economy, which they say is likely to lead to employee pressure for higher pay deals.

They also warn of effects increasing the industry's costs, including pressure for maintenance of pay differentials, both in the industry and between engineering and other sectors, and the potential for increased costs by subcontractors working for engineering firms, many of whose employees, unlike engineering workers in the main, would be likely to be directly affected by a minimum pay law.

One engineering industry leader said: "Our position on the minimum wage is clarified. We are still arguing against it. But we are moving to a practical position."

EEF leaders have now requested involvement in Labour's planned Low Pay Commission, which, if the party forms a Government, would advise it on a minimum pay level.

The EEF paper also makes suggestions to try to ensure that any implementation of minimum pay is "handled sensitively" and to minimise potential adverse effects. These include setting it at an unspecified "low" level, giving employers time to implement it and exempting, as Labour intends, young people in training leading to recognised qualifications.



Oxford Street has been showing the sort of rental growth not seen since the late-1980s and which is expected to spread to the regions by the summer

Record rents in Oxford Street signal road to retail boom

By JASON NISSE

THREE record lettings for stores in Oxford Street, London's leading shopping thoroughfare, have signalled a retail property boom outstripping that of the late-1980s.

Since Christmas, record rents have been set in landmark deals along Oxford Street and property experts say the boom will hit the end of the year.

The first deal was for a 2,575 sq ft store at 248 Oxford Street which was let to Allsports, the leisure clothing retailer, for £380,000 a year. Ten other retailers bid for the site and it is believed that Allsports was not the highest offer.

The effective rent per square foot was a record, beating the

brings the spectre of the economy overheating. This was reinforced yesterday when Barclays, the high street bank, said it expected interest rates to rise to 7.5 per cent by the end of the year.

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The effective rent per square foot was a record, beating the

all-time high for Oxford Street set in 1989, and property experts wondered whether it was a one-off.

However two more deals have confirmed the boom. The lease on the 10,000 sq ft store at 187-195, currently occupied by Next, was sold at a premium of £1.5 million. The current rent is £155,000 a year and the next rent review is not until 2001, so the effective rent is more than £900,000 a year.

This site is on a less attractive part of the street than 248. Another site of a similar size

at 175-179 was also let out last week. Though the owners, Liverpool Victoria Assurance, would not reveal the rental, it is understood that it was around £900,000 a year, more than twice the previous rent level which was set in 1992.

Chris Phillips, retail partner at Healey & Baker, the surveyors, said that Oxford Street was showing the sort of rental growth that had not been seen since the late-1980s.

Mr Phillips is predicting a nationwide retail property boom this year. "What we see

in Oxford Street will be seen in the major cities within six months," he said.

The property boom of the 1980s led a number of leading retailers to speculate in property, often with disastrous results.

One of them, Burton,

has recently bought the lease of its head office at Oxford Circus and is looking to let out the upper floors for retailing. One of the interested parties is said to be Nike, the sports clothing manufacturer, which wants to set up a London superstore.

Mondex UK enlists GiroVend help by acquiring 10% stake

By SARAH CUNNINGHAM

MONDEX UK, the electronic smartcard company, has acquired a 10 per cent stake in GiroVend Cashless Systems, the supplier of cashless payment systems for in-house catering and vending machines.

The deal, which is backed by a co-operation agreement, should help Mondex — which has been jointly developed by NatWest, Midland and BT as a new form of cashless payment — to find markets for its multi-purpose cards. The cards can be used as cash cards to access bank accounts, to pay at vending machines and stores and also to give access to restricted areas and computer systems.

Ron Clark, chief executive of Mondex UK, said: "GiroVend is an undoubted market leader in this field." GiroVend is due to float next month. The listing will value the company at around £25 million.

Mondex and GiroVend intend to target universities, they said. Mondex's smartcards have been tested

in Swindon and in pilot schemes at the Universities of York and Exeter.

MasterCard International's acquisition of 51 per cent of Mondex was also completed yesterday, the companies said. This makes London-based Mondex International a subsidiary of the American credit card giant.

Michael Keegan, chief executive of Mondex International, said: "We are delighted that Mondex has become part of its multi-purpose cards. The cards can be used as cash cards to access bank accounts, to pay at vending machines and stores and also to give access to restricted areas and computer systems."

The founders of Mondex, which will still have its headquarters in London, will retain a 49 per cent stake.

Among the organisations signed up to use Mondex are Royal Bank of Canada, Hong Kong and Shanghai Bank, Wells Fargo, AT&T, Chase Manhattan and ten major banks in Australasia.

Health cover from Tesco and Safeway

By SARAH CUNNINGHAM

SAFEWAY and Tesco, the supermarket groups, are to open a new front in the battle for loyalty by offering health insurance to their customers.

Safeway is expected to offer medical insurance cover from Norwich Union Healthcare, which already supplies policies to Abbey National, Safeway's banking partner.

Tesco is considering a free insurance scheme for holders of its Clubcard Plus. Under the scheme, stores would pay for groceries if the customer were made redundant or became too ill to work. Tesco may extend the scheme to include health insurance, for which cardholders would pay extra. It is believed to be discussing the move with various health insurance providers.

The company, which is moving into banking in partnership with the Royal Bank of Scotland, is believed to be discussing the free grocery insurance scheme with Lloyd's underwriters. Tesco's banking enterprise will begin with a credit card to be launched this summer.

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France Fr 9.57 8.92

Germany Dm 2.87 2.68

Greece Dr 444 418

Hong Kong \$ 13.13 12.13

Iceland 120 100

Ireland Pt 1.08 1.00

Israel Shk 5.69 5.04

Italy Lira 2613 2388

Japan Yen 212.20 198.20

Malta 0.655 0.600

Netherlands Gld 3.197 2.987

New Zealand \$ 2.47 2.25

Norway Kr 11.44 10.64

Portugal Esc 263.50 265.00

S Africa Rd 7.83 7.03

Spain Pes 941.00 824.00

Sweden Kr 12.56 11.79

Switzerland Fr 2.60 2.32

Turkey Lira 203.400 189.400

USA \$ 1.712 1.582

Notes: for small denominations, bank notes supplied by the Bank of England may apply to traveller's cheques.

CHANGE ON WEEK

IN THE ROUND

US dollar

1.6191 (+0.0022)

German mark

2.7253 (-0.0095)

Exchange Index

97.2 (-0.5)

Bank of England official close (4pm)

ROCK MARKET

FT 30 share

2884.5 (+6.3)

FTSE 100

4336.8 (-4.2)

New York Dow Jones

5931.62 (-57.34)

Tokyo Nikkei Avge

19034.54 (+812.54)

WORD WATCHING

Answers from page 38

ORF

(a) A virus disease of sheep, cattle, and goats, characterised by a secondary infection with the helminth *Fasciolopsis buski*, which causes ulcers and sores in and around the mouth and on the feet or other parts of the body. Also called scabby mouth, contagious ecthyma, or contagious pustular dermatitis. Variant of the dialect *hurf*, probably from the Old Norse *hurf* crust or scab on a boil. "The flock is then dipped, vaccinated against orf and allowed to scavenge."

RHAGES

(a) The name of a city (now Rayy in Iran, near Tehran), used attributively to designate a type of pottery made there from the 11th to the 13th centuries, characterised by polychrome enamelling. "The designs on this Rhages enamelled ware are pencilled with miniature-like fineness recalling the beautiful workmanship in the manuscript illuminations of the early 13th century."

PIZZE-BALL

(a) A game similar to rounders in which the ball is hit with the flat of the hand. Perhaps from the obscure Middle Dutch game *pizzan*. "Pize-ball, rig, and a great number of games involving running round the lamp-posts or in and out of the close-areas are still popular."

Begorra, there's sure no Bally place like it

Right hands up who made it to the last episode of *Nostromo*? I see. I think then we'd better start with *Ballykissangel* (BBC1).

Not that many of you are watching that any more. Since David Jason and *A Touch of Frost* got under way on ITV, *Ballykissangel's* audience has fallen by millions, a fact that fills my heart with joy and exposes this ridiculous series for what it is — a puffed-up confection of clichéd, state-subsidised Irish whimsy that enjoyed success solely because there was nothing better to watch. Now there is, we're off.

Last night, however, I felt duty-bound to check that this was indeed the final episode. My, what a clifffanger — Niamh was pregnant (although it's impossible to believe that Ambrose had anything to do with it) and Assumpta (Dervla Kirwan) was thinking of moving to Dublin. Don't go, the gentleman in question turned out

pleaded Father Clifford (Stephen Tompkinson), who is now so wet that I fully expect Brian Quigley to announce plans to turn him into a cross farm. "There are different kinds of family," he whimpered. "There are different kinds of love." And with that, he ripped off his dog collar and seized Assumpta by the... No, sorry, my mistake — and with that, Assumpta looked as she has for most of the series: bored and uninterested. Will no one rid her of this priest?

So much for unrequited love, on with the action. Two binocular-wielding strangers were in town. Cut to Quigley (the always splendid Tony Doyle) offering Assumpta a cash-in-hand, no-VAT deal on her plumbing. Must be Revenue men, we all thought. Must be Revenue men, thought the population of Ballykissangel ten minutes later. Half an hour of day-evading subplots later, the gentleman in question turned out

to be from the Fraud Squad. As a dramatic twist... well, it fair takes your breath away, doesn't it?

I still find disconcerting the information that the series is "Produced with the support of Investment Incentives for the Irish Film Industry, provided by the Government of Ireland", although I'm not sure why. Something to do with foreign governments subsidising our Sunday evenings, I suppose. On the other hand, I found the confirmation at the end of *Nostromo* (BBC2, Saturday) that "This Work has been subsidised by GRECO as part of the Media Programme of the European Union" rather charming.

Nostromo looked more like a European co-production than anything I have seen on television for about 20 years.

At times it resembled nothing more than a game of England versus the Rest of the World. Albert Finney, Chita Firth, Serena

You had to ignore the fact that Spanish and Italian actors do not look or act like the home-grown variety, and you had to ignore the fact that dubbing their voices into *Tales from Europe* English only multiplied these differences. Then it was just a case of forgetting about the ocean liner that set computer effects back about ten years and overlooking the fact that military power in Sulaco seemed to rest with whichever side had more than 24 soldiers and they were almost there. And *Nostromo* was... almost there.

Flawed it may have been, but at least the production did an impressive job of unravelling the complexities of Conrad's plot. How tempting it must have been, however, to call a halt halfway through last night's final instalment. *Nostromo* (Claudio Amendola) had the silver. General Barrios (Adrian E. Carria) had saved Sulaco. Charles Gould (Firth) and

Dr Monyham (Finney) had both faced death and survived, and the fair Emilia (Sofia Thomas) had not been ravished by the wicked Don Pedro — nor indeed by her neglectful husband.

But Conrad's theme, the corruption of greed, would not countenance anything so close to a happy ending. Unfortunately it fell to Giorgio — innkeeper, lighthouse-keeper and troublesome daughter-keeper — to fire the fatal shot. Given the trouble they'd had in dubbing his voice, I was fully prepared for *Nostromo* to fall mortally wounded several seconds before the rifle went off, but for once events passed in the conventional order. "Bang"... "Ah".... The End.

Mahmood Jamal wore his central theme as proudly as Conrad, as his promising but fairly baffling new drama *Turning World* (Channel 4) got under way last

night. The one thing clear at this stage is that it's about brains and the horrible things we do to them, as witnessed by the electro-convulsive therapy freely meted out in Dr Khan's mental hospital, the patient who also just happens to be a boxer and Khan's elderly house-keeper, who appears to be displaying early signs of Alzheimer's. And then there is Art Malik.

Malik plays Shams, a furtive, pot-smoking stranger from Peshawar, who turned up in semi-rural England unannounced. "Where is room?" he asked, in comic stereotype. His very pink host, who just happened to be brought up in Peshawar but has clearly not read *The Moonstone*, showed him, I look forward to discovering what it's really all about in due course.

Finally, a few words about the much-heralded episode of *Roseanne* (Channel 4, Friday) featuring Jennifer Saunders and Joanna Lumley. It was absolutely awful.

REVIEW

Matthew Bond



Scott Thomas and Paul Brooke gamely lining up to take on battalions of handsomely sweaty Latin actors, half of whom wanted to look like Robert De Niro and the other half like Joaquin Cortes, the flamenco dancer. But the more you thought about it, the more authentic it became — this was supposed to be South America. All that was needed was a little act of faith. All right, a big one.

BBC1

6.00am Business Breakfast (94117)
7.00 BBC Breakfast News (T) (74057)
9.00 Breakfast News Extra (T) (643747)
9.20 Style Challenge (161778)
9.45 Kilroy (642250)
10.30 Can't Cook, Won't Cook (26347)
11.00 News (T) (6001463)
11.05 The Really Useful Show (307502)
11.35 Change (5586221)
12.00 News (T) and weather (801279)
12.05pm The Alphabet Game (5693647)
12.30 Going for a Song (7970182)
12.55 The Weather Show (300494329)
1.00 News (T) and weather (77144)
1.30 Regional News (9818111)
1.40 Neighbours (T) (20580502)
2.05 Fire in the Dark (1991) with Olympia Dukakis, A 75-year-old widow who leads an active and spirited life suddenly begins to realise her limitations. Directed by David Jones (762106).
3.30 Plays (139892) 3.50 Pingu (2414453) 3.55 Badger and Badger (7193057) 4.10 Gadget Boy (9493365)
4.35 Record Breakers (Gold) (9879560)
5.00 Newsround (T) (7851328) 5.10 Blue Peter (T) (1134502)
5.35 Neighbours (T) (650873)
6.00 Six O'Clock News (T) and weather (279)
6.30 Newsworld South East (231)
7.00 This Is Your Life (7250).
7.30 Here and Now Exotic pets, the safety of seatbelts in school minibuses, and whether becoming mega-rich overnight changes people's lives (T) (415).
8.00 EastEnders' Grant's return is greeted with delight by Lorraine, but Peggy isn't so pleased to see him (T) (3288).
8.30 The Brittas Empire Gordon arrives at work ready to celebrate Whitby Leisure Centre's seventh birthday (T) (2705).
9.00 News (T) and weather (1057).
9.30 The Bridgewater Three — Miscarriage of Justice John Ware talks to James Robinson, Michael Hickey and Vincent Hickey and their lawyer who uncovered evidence that finally won the three men their freedom (T) (655845).
10.10 Ruby Wax Meets Jane Seymour, Lisa Kudrow and John Goodman (T) (760811).
10.40 The Beast of Lenny Henry (638089) WALES: 10.40 The Star (11.10) A Parent's Guide 11.25 First 97 11.35 The Beast of Lenny Henry 12.25am Film: Cat on a Hot Tin Roof 2.10 News 11.10 Film 97 with Barry Norman Reviews of *The Crucible*, starring Dame Judi Dench and Winona Ryder. Tim Burton's *Edward Scissorhands* (1990) and *Ed Wood* (1994).
7.58 Video Nation Shorts (301809)
8.00 Jeremy Clarkson's Motorway Clarkson investigates motoring in Iceland (T) (4540).
1.25am Weather (7153651)

BBC2

6.00am Open University: Quality Care (6331705) 6.25 Under the Walnut Tree (6303540) 6.50 An English Accent (5370789) 7.15 News (T) (6457892) 7.30 Captain Caveman and the Teen Angels (1363786) 7.55 Blue Peter (T) (7935231)
8.20 Pingu (6051544) 8.25 Harry Jeremy (1233231) 8.35 Lassie (T) (9865163) 9.00 TV6 (28705) 9.30 Pathways of Ballet (3718892) 9.45 Technology Starters (3713347) 10.00 Playdays 10.30 Landmarks (4096153) 10.50 Look and Read (4016927) 11.10 Zig Zag (2016568)
11.30 Ghostwriter 12.00 Testament (438569) 12.30pm Working Lunch (68811) 1.00 History File (1563278) 1.20 German Globe (98280705) 1.25 Landmarks (1593276) 1.45 Storytime (9899960) 2.00 Pingu (T) (3570163) 2.25 Harry Jeremy (T) (6508708).
2.10 Lucky Partners (1990, b/w) with Ganger Rogers, Ronald Colman and Jack Carson. When a handsome stranger wishes a lady good luck, she decides to buy a sweepstake ticket with him on a hunch. But she soon finds she is taking a chance on romance as well as good fortune. Directed by Lewis Milestone.
3.55 News, Regional News (T) and weather (2411386) 4.00 Today's the Day (144) 4.30 Ready, Steady, Cook (328) 5.00 Esther (2328) 5.30 Going, Going, Gone (908) 6.00 Space Precinct (T) (411618).
6.45 As Seen on TV Highlights from the first three series includes a boy's experiences of taking his pet to the vet's (402499).
7.00 People's Century: Fast Forward New tensions and dangers emerging after the demise of communism (T) (7989).
7.58 Video Nation Shorts (301809)
8.00 Jeremy Clarkson's Motorway Clarkson investigates motoring in Iceland (T) (4540).
1.25am Weather (7153651)



Ray Mears in the Arctic (8.30pm)

8.30 Ray Mears' World Survival How to build an igloo, fish through the ice and meet your own drinking water in the Arctic (T) (5237).
9.00 The Only Way Out (1993) with John Ritter, Stephanie Faracy and Henry Winkler. A sociopath terrorises an architect and his wife who were in the throes of an amicable divorce, and her new boyfriend. Directed by Rod Hardy (T) (5188) 10.00 Newsnight (1987) 10.30 Coronation Street (T) (2705).
11.15 The Net American biologist Tom Ray plans to release digital creatures on the internet (258811).
12.00 The Midnight Hour (32222).
12.30am 6.00 Learning Zone: Open University: A Tale of Two Capitals (56757) 1.30 Modern Art (39496) 2.00 Nightschool TV: Modern Languages (56377) 4.00 BBC Focus: Inside 2000 (42545) 4.30 Science Master Classes (31274) 5.30 RCN Nursing Update (32681)

VideoPlus+ and the Video PlusCodes The numbers next to each TV programme listing are Video PlusCode™ numbers, which can be recorded onto a VideoPlus+ disc instantly with a VideoPlus+™ handset. Tap in the Video PlusCodes for the programme you wish to record. VideoPlus+™, PlusCode™ and Video PlusCodes are trademarks of Gemstar Development Ltd.

SKY 1

2.00 Shetland's Hurricane (1989) (47368)
2.45 Red Red Wine (1990) 3.00 The Unforgettable Encounter (1994) (22502) 3.00 Stand Serves His (1985) (53347) 4.00 Timeslip (1992) 4.15 The True Story of the Kelly Gang (1908) (12500) 4.30 The Lost World (1925) (614985) 4.50 The Red Shoe (1935) (57600) 5.15 The Red Shoe (1935) (57600) 5.30 The Red Shoe (1935) (57600) 5.45 Teacher's Pet (594477)

SKY MOVIES GOLD

6.00pm Off Limits (1985) (807789) 2.00 The Secret of My Success (1989) (207231) 12.00 Come the Barbarians (1982) (4840507) 12.15 The King of Marvin Gardens (1983) (13521) 1.30 The Last Picture Show (1971) (5915569)

CARTOON NETWORK/KIDS

Continues cartoons from Sat to Sun, then TWT films as follows:

9.00pm On the Town (1949) (2349079)

11.00 The Thin Man (1934) (2349079)

11.30 The Thin Man Comes Home (1937) (2349079)

1.00 Ladies Who Lie (1944) (2161515)

1.30 SKY SPORTS GOLD

7.00am World Sport Special (61521) 7.30 Badminton (2145206) 8.00 Basketball (4925206) 8.30 Soccer (61522)

8.30 SKY SPORTS 1

7.00am World Sport Special (61521) 7.30 Badminton (2145206) 8.00 Basketball (4925206) 8.30 Soccer (61522)

9.00 SKY SPORTS 2

7.00am World Sport Special (61521) 7.30 Football (2145206) 8.00 Basketball (4925206) 8.30 Soccer (61522)

10.00 SKY SPORTS 3

7.00am World Sport Special (61521) 7.30 Football (2145206) 8.00 Basketball (4925206) 8.30 Soccer (61522)

11.00 SKY SPORTS 4

7.00am World Sport Special (61521) 7.30 Football (2145206) 8.00 Basketball (4925206) 8.30 Soccer (61522)

12.00 SKY SPORTS 5

7.00am World Sport Special (61521) 7.30 Football (2145206) 8.00 Basketball (4925206) 8.30 Soccer (61522)

1.00 SKY SPORTS 6

7.00am World Sport Special (61521) 7.30 Football (2145206) 8.00 Basketball (4925206) 8.30 Soccer (61522)

1.30 SKY SPORTS 7

7.00am World Sport Special (61521) 7.30 Football (2145206) 8.00 Basketball (4925206) 8.30 Soccer (61522)

2.00 SKY SPORTS 8

7.00am World Sport Special (61521) 7.30 Football (2145206) 8.00 Basketball (4925206) 8.30 Soccer (61522)

2.30 SKY SPORTS 9

7.00am World Sport Special (61521) 7.30 Football (2145206) 8.00 Basketball (4925206) 8.30 Soccer (61522)

3.00 SKY SPORTS 10

7.00am World Sport Special (61521) 7.30 Football (2145206) 8.00 Basketball (4925206) 8.30 Soccer (61522)

3.30 SKY SPORTS 11

7.00am World Sport Special (61521) 7.30 Football (2145206) 8.00 Basketball (4925206) 8.30 Soccer (61522)

4.00 SKY SPORTS 12

7.00am World Sport Special (61521) 7.30 Football (2145206) 8.00 Basketball (4925206) 8.30 Soccer (61522)

4.30 SKY SPORTS 13

7.00am World Sport Special (61521) 7.30 Football (2145206) 8.00 Basketball (4925206) 8.30 Soccer (61522)

5.00 SKY SPORTS 14

7.00am World Sport Special (61521) 7.30 Football (2145206) 8.00 Basketball (4925206) 8.30 Soccer (61522)

5.30 SKY SPORTS 15

7.00am World Sport Special (61521) 7.30 Football (2145206) 8.00 Basketball (4925206) 8.30 Soccer (61522)

6.00 SKY SPORTS 16

7.00am World Sport Special (61521) 7.

